

# COLLEGE ENGLISH

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Vol. 13

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# COLLEGE ENGLISH

Volume 13

FEBRUARY 1952

Number 5

## *The West of Walter Van Tilburg Clark*

FREDERIC I. CARPENTER<sup>1</sup>

TWELVE years ago Walter Van Tilburg Clark published *The Ox-Bow Incident*, his first novel. Since then only two other novels and a volume of short stories have appeared. Probably this is the first magazine article to discuss his work as a whole. But upon publication two of his books seemed so excellent that reviewers showered them with superlatives, while readers bought them in large numbers. Several of his short stories have won national prizes. And, most important, all of his fiction has combined a gift for storytelling with the sense of something important to say.

Clark grew up in the city of Reno, where his father was president of the University of Nevada, and he graduated there in 1931. But he was born in Maine, later took his M.A. from the University of Vermont, and then taught school for ten years in New York State. Six years ago he moved back to Nevada to live. Both his feeling of "belonging" to the West and the thoughtful detachment with which he writes of it come from actual experience. He enjoys both the geographical perspective of an

adopted westerner and the mental perspective of an intellectual who grew up in the least intellectual of American college cities.

At the end of *The City of Trembling Leaves*, the autobiographical hero composes a wonderful song, entitled "The Sweet Promised Land of Nevada":

Oh, the Lord, He had labored both earnest and long  
Five days and a half, and was still going strong,  
With the sweat on His brow, but a-singing His  
song,  
When He came to the Land of Nevada.

But the Lord never quite finished Nevada, because the five-o'clock whistle of the sixth day caught him still dreaming over the beautiful land he might create—so the Promised Land remained desert. But the hero of the novel achieves maturity by recognizing and accepting this radical imperfection of things.

Although *The City of Trembling Leaves* was actually his second novel, logically it comes first because of its autobiographical quality and its treatment of romantic adolescence. In this it challenges comparison with Thomas Wolfe's sprawling autobiographical

<sup>1</sup> Resigned from University of California in protest against dismissal of others refusing oath.

novels. If it comes off second best, it is because it lacks the single-minded intensity of Wolfe's absorption in his own experience, while sharing the formlessness of Wolfe's fiction. But characteristically it has a sense of humor which Wolfe never achieved and which foreshadows the sense of form of Clark's other novels.

Like *Of Time and the River*, this novel of adolescence exists both on the level of actual experience and of symbolic imagination. Its chapter titles suggest the symbolism: "About the Virgin Mary of Pyramid Lake and Willis the Worldly" and "About a Totem Tortoise and a City of Sand." But the titles are also humorous: "About Tristram of the Tennis Courts," and "How To Keep the Soul in the Body in One Simple Lesson." They often recall Steinbeck's mock-heroic tales of *Tortilla Flat* rather than Wolfe's solemn novels. And the autobiographical narrator plays a very minor part, telling the story of three young artists-to-be who grow to maturity in the West, while the narrator both participates and observes.

Perhaps the best thing about this, as about all Clark's fiction, is that the narrator identifies himself with the people he describes, at the same time that he understands their faults, and either smiles at their minor troubles or shares their major tragedies. *The City of Trembling Leaves* is the story of the artist as westerner and as American. But the "ordeal" of this western artist is one not of alienation but of shared tragic experience.

Clark's best novels are certainly *The Ox-Bow Incident* and *The Track of the Cat*, and both are tragic. The one describes the lynching of three innocent men, and the subsequent suicides of the leader of the posse and of his son. The other describes the killing of one ranch-

er by a mountain lion and the accidental death of his brother in attempting to track down "the Cat." Both occur in the eastern foothills of the Sierra Nevadas. But there the similarity ends: the first shares the form and the swift narrative action of the traditional western, while the second analyzes in vivid detail the psychological introversion of one family of cattle ranchers. The first seems a little like Stephen Crane's brief *The Red Badge of Courage*, the second more like the long tragedies of Eugene O'Neill. But, in spite of their tone of tragedy, both novels have proved popular: *The Ox-Bow Incident* became a successful Hollywood movie, and both were re-issued in paper covers for mass circulation.

Technically, *The Ox-Bow Incident* is the clearer, although perhaps not more important. From the beginning it has been accepted as a minor classic: Clifton Fadiman called it "so perfect that it seems to deny the possibility of growth on the part of the author." Its form is that of the traditional western, as are all its physical events. But its idea is that of a morality play, and there are arguments about conscience and the nature of justice. Its characters live vividly on both levels, acting out their tragedy of right and wrong. But the radical originality of the book lies in the fact that the traditional "western" values are reinterpreted. The dashing ex-cavalry officer, the "normal" ranchers and cowhands, and the popular "Ma" Grier become really the villains; while the white-faced storekeeper who tries to prevent the lynching, the diffident Negro man-of-all-work, and the weak but bitterly honest son of the ex-cavalry officer become the true heroes. In the middle stands Art Croft, the cowhand who tells the tale (his name is significant) and his side-kick Gil, who

dislike the lynching but do nothing to prevent it because as strangers they are suspect.

As news of the murder of a rancher spreads and an illegal posse gradually forms, "Art" looks over the crowd, seeing: "quiet, gentle men, the most independent in the world too, you'd have said, not likely, man for man, to be talked into anything"—but, in the grip of blind feeling, a mob. Against this mob stands Osgood, the professional do-gooder: "I knew he was trying to do what was right, but he had no heart in his effort. He made me feel ashamed." And Judge Tyler, the windbag, tries ineffectively to lecture the mob. But only Art Davies, the storekeeper, commands their respect in his sincere effort to appeal to their consciences and to explain that "true law, the essence of our sensations of right and wrong, is the conscience of society." But "Ma" Grier shuts him up humorously: "It's them books, Art, them books. You better lay off them." And only the half-articulate Negro, Sparks, and the weakling son remain firm against the lynching, and they do nothing.

The action mounts in intensity as the posse accepts the leadership of the ex-cavalry officer. The narrator is wounded in a confused shooting, the suspects are caught with damaging evidence against them, and the whole group waits until sunrise for the traditional hour for hanging cattle-thieves. But the significant action is psychological, and, after the failure of Art Davies, it follows the argument of Sparks: "It's man takin' upon himself the Lohd's vengeance," and the diatribe of the weakling son who damns the human race, but especially himself, because: "I know better than to do what I do. I've always known better, and not done it." Musing upon this, the narrator comments that

"both of them gave you that feeling of thinking outside yourself, in a big place." And he becomes almost convinced. But shortly after this, he is accidentally wounded, and loses his power to think clearly or to act. The rest is merely observed.

The climax of the physical action is the actual lynching, with the struggle of the victims to convince the posse of their innocence and the pleading of Art Davies. But they fail. Soon after this the posse learns that it was all a mistake, that no one has actually been murdered, and that the victims were totally innocent. Then comes the climax of the psychological action, with the self-accusation of the true hero, Art Davies:

"It should have been stopped," he said, "even with a gun. . . ."

"You didn't even *have* a gun."

"No," he said, "no, I didn't," as if admitting the ultimate condemnation of himself.

That the ex-cavalry officer and his bitter, impotent, weakling son both commit suicide seems an anticlimax. The novel is the story of the tragic failure of an ideal in action—the "westerh" ideal of law and justice. It can also be taken, if you will, as a parable of the tragedy of Western civilization.

Technically, *The Track of the Cat* is an utterly different kind of novel—it is psychological, internal, and symbolic, where the other was physical, external, and social. It is limited to the eight characters of one family but runs to twice the length of the other, which nevertheless sketched in a large group of characters. It is as if Clark had heeded his critic's warning that *The Ox-Bow Incident* was so perfect in form that it could never be repeated. But, in idea, *The Track of the Cat* is also a parable of the tragedy of Western man. Again the self-appointed "leader" and

man-of-action destroys himself, and the impotent dreamer-idealist also fails and is destroyed. And again the apparent evil is hunted down: "the Cat" is killed. But the real evil remains: the symbolic black cat, like the symbolic white whale of a century before, remains in the nature of things to trouble men's minds.

The action of *The Track of the Cat* takes place at the turn of the century on a family ranch in western Nevada. But it begins with a dream—the troubled dream of one brother, suggested by the crying of cattle attacked by a mountain lion. The dreamer, again named Arthur, rouses his brother Curt, and, as they dress, Curt sarcastically attacks Arthur's "dreams." But quickly the subject of dreams is generalized to suggest the old American dream of westward progress: "Virginia City's where the dream winked out. Now we turn back.... Even a good dream, backed up, turns nightmare." Soon this dream is forgotten, and the brothers ride out to track the actual cat. But subtly and gradually the real action becomes the nightmare, and "the Cat" becomes supernaturally malevolent. It kills Arthur, the dreamer; and his brother Curt, blinded to fury by his desire for vengeance, loses his way and is killed. Finally, the third, normal, brother Harold, kills the cat, on the third day of the chase.

In outline form merely, *The Track of the Cat* sounds perhaps superficial or artificial—either a western adventure story or a contrived allegory of evil. Sometimes there are passages of argument and symbolism which obtrude. But the very bulk of the novel, with its accumulation of realistically described details and of psychologically imagined insights, is convincing. Like *Moby Dick*, it exists on separate levels of physical action, of psychological ac-

tion, and of symbolic action, all at once. The "Cat" is physically real, psychologically real (the confused fear of it actually causes Curt's death), and symbolically real. But, as with *Moby Dick*, if you read on one level only, you may be irritated by intrusions of material from the other levels.

In one of his short stories ("The Portable Phonograph") Clark has imagined one of his characters saving four great books from the destruction of civilization: "Shakespeare, the Bible, *Moby Dick*, *The Divine Comedy*." And, clearly, *The Track of the Cat* challenges comparison with *Moby Dick*. Therefore it may possibly be a great novel—or it may only be an overinflated, pretentious novel. But it is not merely an ordinary novel—either you admire it or you do not. And upon its publication the critics were as divided as in the case of *The Ox-Bow Incident* they had been agreed: this was no "minor classic."

*The Track of the Cat* attempts to create—or to re-create—a myth. It tells the old story of Man against Nature. When a demigod, or superman, tries to overcome the Nature of Things and to kill that Black Cat which is the Essence of all Evil, he fails and is destroyed. But when a normal man goes out to track down an ordinary cat, he usually succeeds. Prometheus and Hercules failed and were punished, and, in modern myth, Ahab failed and was destroyed, and now Curt Bridges fails and destroys himself. And all the characters of the modern novel seem larger—and stranger—than life.

The real question, of course, is whether the characters of this modern myth become wholly real and credible; and I believe that they do. There are the three very different brothers, the repressed sister, the normal fiancée,

"the mother" with her martyr complex, and "the father" who remembers the good old days and drinks himself to death—and all are easily recognizable, both in life and in literature. Then there is Joe Sam, the old Indian man-of-all-work. And Joe Sam is both utterly original and wholly credible. As an enslaved survivor of a conquered race he has experienced the ultimate tragedy and has learned the nature of evil. But as an active worker he survives, retiring into himself and observing the tragedy. Almost inarticulate, he nevertheless becomes a kind of Greek chorus who realizes most clearly the nature of the tragedy of the Bridges family on their western American ranch.

Clark's most recent volume, *The Watchful Gods and Other Stories*, does much to illuminate his earlier fiction and to confirm its promise. In the title story, those "Watchful Gods" (which Joe Sam, the Indian, had obeyed in *The Track of the Cat*) are translated into the conceptions of a typical, imaginative American boy. "The Gods" are, of course, the subconscious and often irrational motives which govern the individual. At his best, Clark describes—or, rather, suggests—these motives most vividly. At his worst, he merely blurs the picture by emphasizing them confusedly. *The City of Trembling Leaves*, for instance, is often confused, and the title story of the last volume remains unclear.

Many of his best short stories—and also his own favorites—describe the West, usually in such a way as to emphasize the contrast between the old and the new. "The Indian Well" describes the many inscriptions (or rather scribblings) which a lonely prospector reads on the walls of a shelter near an abandoned mine. Here the sense of time and of the transitoriness of human his-

tory becomes more real than to the most imaginative tourist visiting the ruined cliff-dwellings of Mesa Verde. "The Wind and the Snow of Winter" also describes the return of an old prospector to his home town, only to find his former friends dead and all the landmarks changed. By contrast, the stripped, unemotional story of "Hook," the hawk, emphasizes the changelessness of nature, even in narrating the life and the death of an individual hawk.

Perhaps the best of these stories is "The Anonymous"—the wholly original, strange, and utterly real tale of a young American Indian who came—with mysterious money and privileges—to a public school to get private tutoring in western "culture." An excellent student, he became letter-perfect both in manners and in literary conversation. "It was June again... before Peter Carr's culture was considered complete and his gods revealed." But to the other Indians, whose customs and "gods" he denied, he was, scornfully, "the squawman." Finally a Rolls-Royce carrying a dowager (who "looked at Peter often, with terrifying affection, while she reconstructed him") came to take him "home." But the chauffeur commented to the schoolteacher: "Damned Indian doll. You'd think he owned creation." This "anonymous" modern Indian, alienated from "the gods" both of the old civilization and of the new, becomes the perfect symbol for Clark's western wasteland of Nevada.

The excellence of Clark's fiction lies in the originality and richness of his re-creation of the life of the American West—past and present, real and ideal, savage and civilized. Within this complex life he has sought to describe the motives, or "gods," which actually determine men's actions. In his early, pri-

vately published volume of poetry<sup>2</sup> (otherwise unimportant) "Chuang Tsu, the Wise One" gave this advice:

I have no laws to give  
Save one;  
The Laws are, and are found  
Within.

He has steadily pursued his fictional quest for the laws of this West with single-mindedness and a considerable measure of success.

But the weakness of Clark's fiction lies partly in this very artistic self-consciousness: he has tried so hard to clarify the patterns of his material that his ideas or symbols or "laws" have sometimes become obtrusive. *The Track of the Cat*, as he himself has said, intended a more complex symbolism than most critics have imagined in it. And he has analyzed in a detailed article, "The Ghost of an Apprehension," how he conceived and wrote his brief short

<sup>2</sup> *Ten Women in Gale's House, and Other Poems* (Boston, 1932).

story, "The Portable Phonograph"<sup>3</sup>—which, even before this explication, seemed somewhat neat and contrived.

All his novels, however, suggest in some form the conflict between the actual West of men's experience and the ideal West of men's dreams. So, the very first pages of his first novel described the pictures on a saloon wall: "There was a bright-colored print of a bleached Indian princess in front of a waterfall, [and] a big painting of a stage-coach coming in, the horses all very smooth, round-bellied and with little thin legs all in step and all off the ground. . . ." The description was deeply ironic and also prophetic. "The Sweet Promised Land of Nevada" has become the new "Waste Land," which Clark has made his own. By watering this desert with dreams, he has made it bloom. It promises rich literary fruit.

<sup>3</sup> Both story and article have been anthologized by Mark Schorer in *The Story: A Critical Anthology* (New York, 1950).

## "Great Art Beaten Down": Yeats on Censorship

MARION WITT<sup>1</sup>

WHEN William Butler Yeats made his first visit to America in 1903, the political and religious tolerance on all sides amazed and delighted him in contrast to the hard intolerance of every group in his native Ireland. After many years of effort to foster in Ireland what he had admired in the United States, Yeats recognized sadly, as his life neared its end in the thirties, that in a world hastening toward war fewer and fewer people anywhere stood independently against the increasing efforts to curtail freedom

of thought and opinion in the name of some orthodoxy. Some of Yeats's biographers and critics, emphasizing his romantic nationalism and the supposed authoritarianism of his later years, have neglected his fight against censorship in Ireland, his sustained struggle to keep the human mind everywhere free to criticize, speculate, and create. The latest historian of the Abbey Theatre, Peter Kavanagh, makes clear that such success as Yeats had in Ireland was personal, since within a few months after his death in 1939 many pressure

<sup>1</sup> Hunter College.

groups wrecked completely the artistic standards of the famous institution he had defended for forty years. Today the Abbey languishes with plays chosen not for excellence but because they are written in Gaelic or because they are theologically or politically "correct"; and Ireland maintains a moral censorship of printed matter so strict as to make her absurd—the 1948 list of *Books Prohibited in Eire* contains over two thousand titles. Yet from the beginning to the end of his life, as poet, playwright, theatre manager, and public man, Yeats never surrendered to the forces of repression.

Yeats always believed that any kind of censorship is dangerous, and he repeatedly stated that unless the Abbey could be free of government or mob interference, he preferred to close its doors. He early protested censorship by the Anglican or Roman Catholic clergy, by supersensitive Irish nationalists, or by the English government in Ireland. He inveighed against a boycotting philistinism that thought Rossetti's women "guys," Rodin's women "ugly," and Ibsen "immoral"; against the scorn of the Anglo-Irish (as represented by Trinity College, Dublin) for Irish myth of the past or Irish life in the present; against the fixed conventions of the commercial theatre. Theatrical orthodoxy, Yeats said, is "much less pliant than the orthodoxy of the church, for there is nothing so passionate as a vested interest disguised as an intellectual conviction."<sup>2</sup> In the theatre he found, too, that the English censor rarely interfered with anything that made money, "for money is always respectable."<sup>3</sup> All these

<sup>2</sup>"The Irish Dramatic Movement," *Samhain* (1903); in *Collected Works* (Stratford-on-Avon, 1908), IV, 107.

<sup>3</sup>"The Dramatic Movement," *Samhain* (1904); in *Collected Works*, IV, 137.

—Irish patriots, pulpits, philistines, the English governing classes, the subservient critics of the commercial theatre—used as tool a venal press which gladly whipped up an artificial frenzy. Yeats scorned "that defense of virtue by those who have but little, which is the pomp and gallantry of journalism and its right to govern the world." The press employed, too, a method still effective. To Yeats it was "the greatest and most ignoble power of journalism, the art of repeating a name again and again with some ridiculous or evil association."<sup>4</sup>

The support Yeats gave to men he personally disliked or to works he did not admire is more significant than his championship of the plays of his friend Synge. Yeats's blindness to Shaw's artistry, for example, in no way affected his defense against the English government of the Abbey Theatre's right in 1909 to play *The Shewing-Up of Blanco Posnet*, which had been banned in England. Though the English government threatened to revoke the patent of the Abbey and Yeats and Lady Gregory actually faced the closing of their little theatre and the loss by fine of a small capital slowly accumulated, they stood firm and triumphed over the Castle. In part they won because they had already successfully resisted the Catholic church over Yeats's *Countess Cathleen* and the Irish nationalists over Synge's *Playboy of the Western World*. In his late years when Yeats rarely devoted his energy to reviewing, it is significant that his comment in 1933 on an unknown young Irishman's new book emphasizes not so much the excellence of the book as Ireland's need for unpurged naturalism and

<sup>4</sup>"J. M. Synge and the Ireland of His Time" (1910), *Essays* (New York, 1924), pp. 386-87.

Yeats's own desire to protect works for which he could not feel sympathy:

Much modern Irish literature is violent, harsh, almost brutal, in its insistence upon the bare facts of life. Again and again I have defended plays or novels unlike anything I have myself attempted, or anything in the work of others that has given me great pleasure, because I have known that they were medicinal to a people struggling against second-hand thought and insincere emotion.<sup>5</sup>

In 1927 when the Irish Dail was moving toward a law on censorship, Yeats wrote a friend:

Have you read Liam O'Flaherty's *Informer* or his *Mr. Gilhooley*? I think they are great novels and too full of abounding natural life to be terrible despite their subjects. They are full of that tragic farce we have invented. I imagine that part of the desire for censorship here is the desire to keep him out.<sup>6</sup>

This praise carries no hint of a venomous attack O'Flaherty had made on Yeats in the preceding year (1926) because of the way Yeats had defended O'Casey's *Plough and the Stars*. In a hysterical letter printed in the *Irish Statesman*, O'Flaherty classed Yeats with "pompous fools" and said he had risen to fame on the shoulders of the heroic Irish nationalists of the preceding generation. O'Flaherty's raging anger and absurd charges in no way affected Yeats's literary judgment that the ebullient young novelist should be heard.

From the beginning Yeats's arguments against censorship grew out of his firm conviction that literature, supremely important, should never be a servant to morals or politics. In 1896 he wrote:

Ireland . . . is so busy with opinions that she cannot understand that imaginative literature

<sup>5</sup> "The Great Blasket," review of *Twenty Years A-Growing* by Maurice O'Sullivan, *Spectator*, CL (June 2, 1933), 798-99.

<sup>6</sup> Letter to Mrs. Olivia Shakespear, quoted in Joseph Hone, *W. B. Yeats* (New York, 1942), p. 406.

<sup>7</sup> V (February 20, 1926), 739-40.

wholly, and all literature in some degree, exists to reveal a more powerful and passionate, a more divine world than ours; and not to make our ploughing and sowing, our spinning and weaving, more easy or more pleasant, or even to give us a good opinion of ourselves by glorifying our past or our future.<sup>7</sup>

Deprived of the religious beliefs of his youth, Yeats made for himself a kind of religion of the truths revealed in the world's great books. Literature, he soon insisted, is "the great teaching power of the world, the ultimate creator of all values . . . not only in the sacred books whose power everybody acknowledges, but by every movement of imagination in song or story or drama that height of intensity and sincerity has made literature at all." Every masterpiece, then, is "a portion of the conscience of mankind."<sup>8</sup>

If literature is the great teaching power, as Yeats assumed, charges of immorality hurled against it by press and pulpit will be found most frequent exactly when men of letters illuminate some obscure corner of the conscience. Every increase in conscience, therefore, as men of letters understand the term, will make literature, especially drama, its most immediately powerful form, "more daring, more logical, more free-spoken," and, to "the rough and ready conscience of the newspaper and pulpit," more immoral. In an appeal to nationalism, Yeats told the Irish that this moral puritanism, "a pretended hatred of vice and a real hatred of intellect," was not Irish at all but an "English cuckoo." To the clergy who wanted "all mankind painted with a halo or with horns," Yeats insisted that "there is no evil that men and women may not be

<sup>8</sup> "The New Irish Library," *Bookman*, X (June, 1896), 83-84.

<sup>9</sup> "An Irish National Theatre," "Moral and Immoral Plays," *Samhain* (1903); in *Collected Works*, IV, 122, 117.

driven into by their virtues all but as readily as by their vices." To all those who believe every work must support a moral law he said that "the subject of art is not law, which is a kind of death, but the praise of life, and it has no commandments that are not positive."<sup>10</sup>

When a Connaught bishop charged his people that they "should never read stories about the degrading passion of love," Yeats wrote that the bishop must be ignorant of "a chief glory of his Church."<sup>11</sup> Yet the "English cuckoo" of puritanism nested itself so well in Ireland that a quarter of a century later, when the Irish were ready to pass their Censorship of Publications Bill, Yeats used more elaborately the same arguments he had addressed to the bishop of Connaught. "The Censorship and St. Thomas Aquinas"<sup>12</sup> begins with a sentence from the proposed bill: "The word 'indecent' shall be construed as including 'calculated to excite sexual passions.'" Such a definition, Yeats observed, "ridiculous to a man of letters, must be sacrilegious to a Thomist." Quoting Cardinal Mercier, Yeats pointed out that St. Thomas, unlike Plato (or Descartes) held "that the soul is wholly present in the whole body and all its parts." Then in an eloquent passage Yeats showed how in the abstract splendor of Byzantine basilicas, "stood saints with thought-tortured faces and bodies, . . . a Christ with a face of pitiless intellect, or a pinched, flat-breasted virgin holding a child like a wooden doll." An

<sup>10</sup> "Moral and Immoral Plays," "The Theatre, the Pulpit, and the Newspapers," *United Irishman* (1903); "First Principles," "The Dramatic Movement," *Samhain* (1904); in *Collected Works*, IV, 117-19, 124, 126, 136, 159.

<sup>11</sup> "Moral and Immoral Plays," *Collected Works*, IV, 119.

<sup>12</sup> *Irish Statesman*, XI (September 22, 1928), 47-48.

art of the body, "an especial glory of the Catholic Church," within half a century after St. Thomas' death, inspired Giotto, and within three centuries bodies natural and beautiful and "represented with all the patience of 'sexual passion'" came from Andrea del Sarto or Raphael or Titian. Yeats ended his argument by asking: "Are we prepared to exclude such art from Ireland and to sail in a ship of fools, fools that dressed bodies Michael Angelo left naked, Town Councillors of Montreal who hid Discobulus in the cellar?" Despite Yeats's plea, A. E.'s temperate arguments, and Shaw's vivid diatribe against a legal censorship, Ireland was prepared to sail in a ship with no berths for recalcitrant genius. In 1929 the Censorship of Publications Bill became law.

Yeats realized fully that literature, always personal, always "one man's vision of the world, one man's experience, . . . can only be popular when men are ready to welcome the visions of others. A community that is opinion-ridden," he added, "even when those opinions are in themselves noble, is likely to put its creative minds into some sort of a prison."<sup>13</sup> When in 1905 Synge's *Well of the Saints* was played in Dublin in an atmosphere of quiet, deep hostility, Yeats reported to John Quinn, "We will have a hard fight before we get the right of every man to see the world in his own way admitted."<sup>14</sup> Synge's intense personality raised well an issue previously unknown in Ireland: the creative man of letters unacceptable to the public because of the very freshness of his moral judgments, the originality and depth of his imagination. The ob-

<sup>13</sup> "An Irish National Theatre," *United Irishman* (1903); in *Collected Works*, IV, 121.

<sup>14</sup> Letter to John Quinn, quoted by Hone, *op. cit.*, p. 218.

jection to Synge was, Yeats said, "not mainly that he makes the country people unpleasant and immoral, but that he has got a standard of morals and intellect." The public "shrink from Synge's harsh, heroical, clean, wind-swept view of things."<sup>15</sup> Later Yeats insisted that Synge was "but the more hated because he gave his country what it needed, an unmoved mind where there is a perpetual last day, a trumpeting, and coming up to judgement."<sup>16</sup> Forging the uncreated conscience of a race is, as Joyce also learned, a task for which the smith receives belated thanks. Yeats experienced no deeper bitterness than the recognition that the excellent is hated simply because it is excellent: that Parnell and Hugh Lane were repudiated because of the very originality and nobility of what they would do for their people.

Years after Synge was dead, Yeats was insisting again on the need for audacity of thought in an essay so pointed that even a friendly and sympathetic editor, A. E., dared not publish it for fear it would endanger the very existence of the *Irish Statesman*. In the *Dial*,<sup>17</sup> accordingly, Yeats held up to ridicule two particularly foolish examples of Irish clerical censorship. One of the censored works was an old masterpiece; the other, a modern imaginative re-creation of a religious story. The Christian Brothers had put out a circular headed "A Blasphemous Publication," which told of a "horrible insult to God, . . . a Christmas Carol set to music and

<sup>15</sup> Letter to Quinn, 1907, quoted by Hone, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

<sup>16</sup> "Preface to the First Edition of John M. Synge's Poems and Translations" (1909), *Essays*, p. 384.

<sup>17</sup> "The Need for Audacity of Thought," *Dial*, LXXX (February, 1926), 215-19. The same essay was published in England under the title "Our Need for Religious Sincerity," *Criterion*, IV (April, 1926), 306-11.

ridiculing in blasphemous language the Holy Family." The editor of a Catholic boys' paper burned copies in the Dublin streets with filming of the ceremony. The "devilish literature" burned was the *Cherry Tree Carol*. Yeats said he resented educators so ignorant "that they do not recognize the most famous Carol in the English language"; but his weightiest argument, aside from the fact that the *Cherry Tree Carol* is a masterpiece, "because something of great moment is there completely stated," is that the whole carol follows from a belief in the Incarnation. Obviously, Yeats said, the churchmen who condemned it did not believe in that event. Though Yeats himself did not, he desired belief; hence the old carol and all similar art delighted him.

The modern work banned and defended for audacity of thought, Lennox Robinson's story, "The Madonna of Slieve Dun," though earlier rejected by an English editor because it might give offense, had already been published in an American periodical with no word of reproach from its readers. When "The Madonna of Slieve Dun" appeared in Dublin in the first issue of *Tomorrow* (1924), the magazine was immediately banned, and in the resulting furor Mr. Robinson was discharged from his position on the National Library Board. The story tells of a religious girl who dreamed of the Second Coming, was ravished while unconscious, convinced herself and her family that the child was the Redeemer until all was revealed by the tramp who had raped her. Because Roberto Rossellini's film, *The Miracle*, banned as blasphemous in New York in 1950, is closely parallel in concept, Yeats's arguments in defense of Robinson are still pertinent. Robinson's enemies forgot, said Yeats, that "we cannot understand any historical event till we

have set it amidst new circumstance"; for minds that have belief "grow always more abundant, more imaginative, more full of fantasy even, as its object approaches; and to deny that play of mind is to make belief impossible." Yeats thought that "the intellect of Ireland is irreligious, and its moral system, being founded upon habit, not intellectual conviction, has shown of late that it cannot resist the onset of modern life." Moreover, the Irish, "quick to hate and slow to love, . . . have never lacked a press to excite the most evil passions." The whole, Yeats pointed out, is a European problem (he might have said world-wide), shown in an acute form in Ireland. The only solution lies in "audacity of speculation and creation," in a new consideration of the foundations of existence. A couple of years later, apropos of the censorship bill, Yeats wrote in England<sup>18</sup> that, because all great literature engages in just such audacity of speculation, the proposed outrageous censorship law would ban all great love poetry and such writers as Darwin, Marx, Flaubert, Balzac, and Proust. The Irish, he said, "do not understand that you cannot unscramble eggs, that every country passing out of automatism passes through demoralization, and that it has no choice but to go on into intelligence." *Playboy and Plough and the Stars* were attacked because, like the *Cherry Tree Carol*, "they contain what a belief, tamed down into a formula, shudders at, something wild and ancient."

Yeats's views on the rights of the individual conscience, expressed often in his remarks on censorship, nowhere are shown more clearly than in his protest as Irish senator against the divorce bill, aimed to impose on the Protestant

minority the views on divorce of the Catholic majority. Yeats's speech, which criticized both Catholic and Anglican ecclesiastics, defended the liberty of minorities, the right of the individual conscience, rather than divorce as such. Never did Yeats speak more eloquently, and the whole led to what Joseph Hone called "the proud and justifiable oration":

We against whom you have done this thing are no petty people. We are one of the great stocks of Europe. We are the people of Burke; we are the people of Grattan; we are the people of Swift, the people of Parnell. We have created the most of the modern literature of this country. We have created the best of its political intelligence.

On the issues joined in the Free State, Yeats spoke even more frankly in the *Irish Statesman*<sup>19</sup> than he had on the floor of the senate. He told his readers that there had been no such spectacle of Catholic majority ruling for the non-Catholic minority since medieval Spain. He reminded Irishmen that the church had been wrong to fight against the union of Italy and that the divorce bill was a blow against the union of Ireland, since Ulster Protestants must be convinced that in joining Eire they will not lose their right of individual judgment. Insisting that laws should be made "by statesmen and not by a celibate clergy, however patriotic or public-spirited," Yeats urged the minority to resist, since fanaticism had won this victory and might win more.

Against the forces of repression Yeats advised continual vigilance, but he suggested more positive measures. The first of these was education. Years before he became a senator, Yeats had noted that education in Irish secondary schools, especially the Catholic schools, substituted pedantry for taste, "pedantry,

<sup>18</sup>"The Irish Censorship," *Spectator*, CXLI (September 29, 1928), 391-92.

<sup>19</sup>"An Undelivered Speech," *Irish Statesman*, IV (March 14, 1925), 8-10.

which opens to the mind a kind of sensual ease." He found "no young man out of these schools who has not been injured by the literature and the literary history learned there." Young Catholics, however, who had not been through these schools Yeats thought more imaginative than Protestant boys and girls of the same age. This led him to the conclusion that "Catholic secondary education destroys . . . much that the Catholic religion gives. Provincialism destroys the nobility of the Middle Ages."<sup>20</sup> In a speech before the Irish Literary Society in 1925,<sup>21</sup> based on his experience as inspector of schools for the senate, Yeats pleaded anew for the arts in Ireland, held back by ignorance and by defective education. Base the curriculum, he said, for children on the old folk life, and for the mature intellect upon Berkeley's philosophy and Burke's view of history, "and Ireland is reborn, potent, armed and wise." If this curriculum seems a shade simple to achieve so large a purpose, Yeats concluded that religion should be taught as "the most powerful part" of the history of the world and that the child must know the religious part of its whole inheritance, "not as a mere thought . . . but as part of its emotional life."

Yeats, like most other Irish men of letters, insisted, too, that children should be taught in what was for most of them their native tongue, English. The effort to restore by law a primitive language was aimed, Yeats believed, at isolating Ireland from the world. In a symposium he wrote on "Compulsory Gaelic,"<sup>22</sup> Peter (certainly Yeats himself) probes

<sup>20</sup> "The Death of Synge: Extracts from a Diary Kept in 1909," *Autobiography* (New York, 1936), p. 426.

<sup>21</sup> "The Child and the State," *Irish Statesman*, V (December 5, 12, 1925), 393-94, 425.

<sup>22</sup> *Irish Statesman*, II (August 2, 1924), 649-52.

the psychology which makes a nation long subject to another wish, in turn, to enslave its own citizens. "We . . . prefer," says Peter, "to make men servile, rather than permit their opinions to differ from our own, and if there is a man notable for intellect and sincerity, we fit some base motive to his every act that he may not prevail against us." When Paul defends the right of the government to compel instruction in Gaelic and even urges that certain literatures like those of Spain or Italy "would go better into Gaelic than into English," Peter comes to the center of his argument:

As soon as a play or book is translated, which goes deep into human life, it will be denounced for immorality or irreligion. Certain of our powerful men advocate Gaelic that they may keep out the European mind. They know that if they do not build a wall, this country will plunge, as Europe is plunging, into philosophic speculation.

Timothy, the third in the symposium, tries unsuccessfully to make peace between the contestants by urging the possibility of "a kind of politics where one need not be certain," for "imitation is automatic, but creation moves in a continual uncertainty"; and he concludes ironically: "There are moments—unpractical moments, perhaps—when I think the State should leave the mind free to create."

Not all Yeats's forays for literary freedom were solemn affairs, for he often displayed that love of mischief he had thought near the core of the Irish intellect. In the course of his earnest speech on divorce he paused to ask whether the stern moralists considered removing from Dublin streets the statues of Nelson, O'Connell, and Parnell, whose private lives would not meet standards of conduct that the new state meant to set up. Lord Glenavy, presiding over the senate, asked whether the debate

might not leave the dead alone; but Yeats refused to do so either in legislative halls or later in an amusing poem. "The Three Monuments" quotes the popular statesmen who, in the shadow of the statues of Ireland's most renowned patriots, stand and urge the nation to cling to purity, shun ambition:

For intellect would make us proud  
And pride bring in impurity:  
The three old rascals laugh aloud.

The whole project of *Tomorrow*, founded at Yeats's suggestion on a real belief in the immortality of the soul and charging bishops with heresy in a fashion Lionel Johnson had indulged in during Yeats's youth, was conceived, no doubt, as mischief. That the first issue contained this statement on immortality (certainly suggested by Yeats and probably his work), Lennox Robinson's madonna story, and Yeats's great sonnet, "Leda and the Swan," made banning inevitable. When the ban came, Yeats was in highest spirits and dreamed of a wild paper for the young, which would suffer suppression, he hoped, many times, "for the logical assertion, with all fitting deductions, of the immortality of the soul."<sup>23</sup> When Frank O'Connor, F. R. Higgins, and Yeats protested the ban on Shaw's *The Adventures of the Black Girl in Her Search for God*, Yeats carried, to the amazement of the younger men, a roll of photographs of Michelangelo's frescoes in the Sistine Chapel to prove to the Irish official that nudity is endurable in the Vatican. This argument was hardly more serious than Shaw's suggestion that the Black Girl wear petticoats in an Irish version. Yeats had his fun baiting the official, and the ban on *Black Girl* remained in Ireland until 1947.

Yeats lived almost ten years after the

<sup>23</sup> Letter to Mrs. Olivia Shakespear, June 21, 1924, quoted by Hone, *op. cit.*, p. 386.

passage of the Irish censorship bill, and all who, like T. S. Eliot, think the "principle" of censorship is tenable may well brood on his experience under government rule of the intellectuals. Yeats's first move, as Sean O'Casey has recently reported,<sup>24</sup> was to propose and secure the appointment of a Protestant cleric to the censorship committee. Since any ban had to be unanimous, Yeats thought his candidate would vote against the Roman Catholic members and thus make censorship harmless. To his consternation the Protestant cleric, stricter than his colleagues, demanded banning of books the others were ready to pass. Yeats's positive contribution to the struggle in the thirties was founding the Irish Academy of Letters to add dignity to literature and to unite the intellectuals against the ridiculous censorship of books. Significantly, Yeats recorded in his diary of 1930 that Synge "must have felt compelled to his conflict with the pasteboard morality of political Dublin to make the world of his imagination more and more complete." Perhaps some such impulse motivated the older Yeats as ill and tired he continued his campaign in the face of defeat.

Though Yeats's own printed works escaped the official Irish ban, his poems were not welcomed by Irish editors or critics, and the Abbey Theatre was under constant attack. Sir Herbert Grierson has noted since Yeats's death that Yeats often said to him in their early meetings "that once the fight with England was over it would be followed by the fight for intellectual freedom against the domination of the priesthood." In New York, where Yeats was in 1932 gathering funds for the Irish Academy, Grierson re-

<sup>24</sup> "The Tumult and Pathos," review of Peter Kavanagh, *The Story of the Abbey Theatre*, New York Times Book Review, October 15, 1950.

minded Yeats, "The clergy seem to have won a pretty complete victory," and Yeats "acknowledged somewhat sadly that it was so."<sup>25</sup> In 1935 Yeats arrived in Dublin to find wild denunciations of the Abbey for blasphemy and appeals to the government to withdraw the subsidy and introduce a censorship of the stage. The offense was producing O'Casey's *The Silver Tassie*. Yeats, as a director of the theatre and still its guiding spirit, was especially denounced by the *Standard*, the chief clerical newspaper. In all this furor he said that the educated Catholics, clerics and laymen, knew that his fight was against ignorance but that they could not openly support the Abbey in the contest. In the next year, 1936, aroused by the Civil War in Spain, a gathering of bigots in a new Christian Front threatened mob violence against the Irish Academy of Letters and against Yeats in particular. He was much disturbed when the Abbey wanted to do his new play, *The Herne's Egg*, and a little later greatly relieved when the production was abandoned; for he found himself no longer fit for riots and a bad one seemed almost certain.<sup>26</sup>

In 1934 Yeats wrote<sup>27</sup> that the Abbey Theatre of world fame and the Irish Academy were held in low regard because the upper class cared for Ireland only as a place for sport, while the rest of the population was "drowned in religious and political fanaticism." When he had protested to members of the government over some attack on the theatre or the banning of a book, Yeats said he

<sup>25</sup> Grierson, Preface to V. K. Narayana Menon, *The Development of William Butler Yeats* (Edinburgh, 1942), p. xii.

<sup>26</sup> *Letters on Poetry to Dorothy Wellesley* (New York, 1940), letters of September 3, 1935, November 28 and December 9, 1936, pp. 23-24, 117, 121.

<sup>27</sup> *The King of the Great Clock Tower, Commentaries and Poems* (New York, 1935), pp. 37 ff.

came away feeling that the minister felt as he did, "but was helpless; the mob reigned." Though Yeats still faintly hoped for

Might of the Church and the State,  
Their mobs put under their feet,

he at once warned the poet,

Wander in dreams no more;  
What if the Church and the State  
Are the mob that howls at the door!

At this point Yeats made the gloomiest prophecy he ever made for Ireland:

If that reign [of the mob] is not broken our public life will move from violence to violence or from violence to apathy, our Parliament disgrace and debauch those that enter it; our men of letters live like outlaws in their own country.

As Yeats's *saeva indignatio* deepened in his last decade, he inevitably questioned the importance of the nationalism and racism he had long advocated; but he never openly admitted his doubts. Instead, he continued to make what he called "necessary" senatorial speeches, claiming the Irish literary movement essential to holding together the thirty million Irish scattered over the world and insisting that all his work had been to that end; yet in a letter reporting one such speech to Dorothy Wellesley, he added, "My dear, I am anarchic as a sparrow," and quoted Blake on the worthlessness of kings and parliaments.<sup>28</sup> The mask is torn away for a moment, too, in a poem, "A Parnellite at Parnell's Funeral" (1934), where the Parnellite, convinced of the guilt of all the people, not of any man or men, thirsting for accusation of himself, insists:

All that was sung,  
All that was said in Ireland is a lie  
Bred out of the contagion of the throng,  
Saving the rhyme rats hear before they die.

<sup>28</sup> *Letters to Dorothy Wellesley*, August 13, 1937, p. 157.

*Purgatory* (1938), the terrible last play, is a palinode of Yeats's earlier nationalism. He said himself that a spirit in the play "suffers because of its share, when alive, in the destruction of an honoured house. That destruction is taking place all over Ireland today."<sup>29</sup> Before the ruined house "the remorse of the dead" for their part in this ruin and "the misery of the living" are linked in the final line of *Purgatory*. No sharper contrast could be conceived than between *Purgatory* and that early bit of patriotic sentimentality, *Cathleen ni Houlihan*, of the four beautiful green fields and the fighting Irish sons. If Ireland had come to such a state as *Purgatory* symbolizes, Yeats's talk of "our Irish fight" was meaningless. A. E., equally helpless in the new Ireland, told an American audience that 100 per cent Irishmen, Englishmen, or Americans are "the most perfectly intolerable people, at least from the artist's and poet's point of view."<sup>30</sup> Yeats never publicly agreed. Only in a letter did he concede that the fight for right and justice had nothing to do with this or that country, that it was Shaw's fight, every man's fight, to stiffen the spines of the wise and the good against the stupid and the evil in Ireland, in England, everywhere.<sup>31</sup>

*On the Boiler*, published in the year after Yeats's death and directed to Irish readers, attributed all oppressions in Ireland to the new representative government which gave Ireland over to the incompetent. After accounts of

<sup>29</sup> Interview with Yeats, *Irish Times*, August 13, 1938. A bitter controversy over the meaning of *Purgatory* filled columns in the *Irish Times* during the fortnight after its first performance, August 10, 1938.

<sup>30</sup> John Eglinton, *A Memoir of A. E., George William Russell* (London, 1937), p. 161.

<sup>31</sup> Letters to Dorothy Wellesley, December 23, 1936, pp. 126-27.

burning of books by mobs who invaded public libraries—or even, in Galway, the solemn disposal by a library committee of all of Shaw's works—Yeats scornfully thought it probable that many men in Irish public life should never have been taught to read or write. The half-education doled out by government incompetents he found a total evil. Yet once more he suggested a curriculum for Irish schools and once more he insisted that the requirement of Gaelic as a spoken language must come slowly; for "a sudden or forced change of language may be the ruin of the soul." Bitter, violent, outspoken, Yeats perched "on the boiler," the platform used by a fanatic Irishman of his youth; and here ended his fight with those he believed to be enemies of all his imagination valued.

Every important account of Irish life and literature since 1930 notes how the censorship outlaws Irish men of letters in their own country or sends them to Paris, London, or New York. Leslie Daiken in 1936 wrote that "as a result of veto, ban and boycott the whole social atmosphere tends not only to thwart, but atrophy, the creative impulse among poets, and reduce the rising generation to one of cultural frustrations."<sup>32</sup> In 1949 Sean O'Faolain complained as a Catholic writer that "the Church relies on the weapon of rigid authority" and that the priest "takes the easy way out by applying to all intellectual ideas the test of their effect on the poor and the ignorant."<sup>33</sup> L. A. G. Strong, also in 1949, said:

Ireland today persecutes every writer who is not content to make his act of submission and accept a censorship which in this country [Eng-

<sup>32</sup> Leslie Daiken (ed.), *Goodbye, Twilight: Songs of the Struggle in Ireland* (London, 1936), p. xii.

<sup>33</sup> *The Irish: A Character Study* (New York, 1949), pp. 150 ff.

land] would be thought excessive for a girls' school. Her rulers, spiritual and temporal, seem resolved to keep her in a pre-adolescent stage. Few artists are able to endure this.<sup>34</sup>

In the nineties Yeats had planned to found a system of libraries to educate the Irish for wider tolerance in the arts; but today, as Frank O'Connor has pointed out, no Protestant may be a librarian in Eire, nor may the patrons of libraries read most modern literature.<sup>35</sup>

Yeats lost his battle in Ireland and added his name to the roster of great men who have struggled for the freedom of the human mind against powers that would enslave it. As his friend Sir William Rothenstein wrote, "Yeats, like Shaw, was a man of great courage who championed losing causes and men who were unfairly assailed." Rothenstein has noted, too, how Yeats risked the Ameri-

can popularity he depended on when he protested in the New York press against the moral refusal of hotels to admit Gorki and his mistress.<sup>36</sup> Today in the United States the issues are greater than a hotel room for Gorki. Books and films and plays are banned and boycotted not because they are pornographic or dangerous to the national security but because they represent a group unflatteringly or displease a powerful organization or shock an adolescent sense of reality or even because, though the work is innocent, the author is suspected of having once been "subversive." Yeats's arguments against censorship in Ireland are unhappily, more pertinent in the United States today than when, almost fifty years ago, he rejoiced in the easy tolerance he found in the new world.

<sup>34</sup> *The Sacred River: An Approach to James Joyce* (London, 1949), p. 10.

<sup>35</sup> "Ireland," *Holiday*, December, 1949, p. 41.

<sup>36</sup> Sir William Rothenstein, *Men and Memories, 1872-1900* (New York, 1931); "Three Impressions. I," *The Arrow*, summer, 1939.

## Feste's Night

ALAN S. DOWNER<sup>1</sup>

OF SHAKESPEARE'S romantic comedies, none has manifested a more robust stage life than *Twelfth Night*. Something about the mixture of the elements in it seems to present a perennial challenge to our actors and directors. We remember with the greatest pleasure the delightfully imaginative production conceived and played by Miss Jane Cowl, its setting the pages of a vast picture book turned, with great appropriateness, by Feste, the clown. We remember thankfully Miss

Cowl's own performance in which the style and grace of her action and the rich music of her voice established the proper balance and blending of the romantic with the more boisterous elements of the play. We remember the Webster-Theatre Guild revival, with Miss Helen Hayes's tomboyish Viola and Maurice Evans' preposterous but somehow comically appropriate cockney steward. And we are constantly reminded by stage histories and volumes of memoirs of the *Twelfth Night* of Harley Granville-Barker, a revolution in the theory and practice of Shakespearean staging. This con-

<sup>1</sup> Princeton University. Author of *The British Drama* (Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1950); *Fifty Years of American Drama, 1900-1950* (Regnery, 1951).

tinuing success with twentieth-century audiences is history, but it is nonetheless surprising.

"LADY, YOU HAVE BEEN MISTOOK"

It is a little surprising, to begin with, that contemporary audiences who have delighted in a Freudian Hamlet and an anti-Fascist Brutus should take pleasure in a plot which involves so antiquated and unrealistic a device as the separation, wanderings, and reunion of identical twins. This can, I think, be seen in no enlightened way—it is a comic bolus, and the audience is required to swallow it or go to the movies. The Elizabethans, who had no choice, swallowed it without gagging; it was a conventional plot, and no doubt they agreed with Mr. Bayes that a plot was only an excuse to bring in fine things.

In *Twelfth Night*, to be sure, Shakespeare spares us much of the tedious coming and going that characterize the two Antiphouses and the two Dromios of his earlier handling of the Twins Confused. Yet his plot insistently turns upon them: the mistaking of Sebastian for Viola brings about the public dénouement of the comic knot. Further, the confrontation of Sebastian and Viola, dressed in her brother's clothes, gives occasion for an *anagnorisis*.

In the last scene of *Twelfth Night* Viola stands face to face with her newly recovered twin, Sebastian. The two stand at a distance, savoring the pleasure of a quest about to be successfully concluded, and exchange their tokens: their father's name, the mole upon his brow, the date of his death, Sebastian's clothing. After wanderings, uncertainties, and confusions they luxuriate in the security of an undisguised truth, of certain reality.

But this is a recognition on more than

one level. Sebastian's acknowledgment of Viola opens the stubbornly shut eyes of Orsino. He recognizes both the fact and, slowly, the truth behind the fact. At first he recalls only Viola's ambiguous declaration that she can never love woman as she does him and requests to see her in her woman's weeds, to see, as it were, an outward sign. A moment later, prompted by Olivia and his own recollection of Viola's devoted service, he offers her his hand in marriage. Perfunctory as the action is, we are nonetheless permitted to conclude that Orsino is at last acting realistically, that he no longer pursues the impossible she, the Unattainable Beloved, but *recognizes* the principle of a marriage of true minds.

"FOR SUCH DISGUISE AS HAPLY SHALL  
BECOME THE FORM OF MY INTENT"

The familiar convention of the Twins Confused is thus employed by Shakespeare for purposes beyond the convention. The unraveling of identities is not the end but the means to the end of his comedy. And, in order that the confusion of brother and sister may be convincing, he is forced to resort to another convention of his stage, the "breeches role." Like the conventional recognition scene, however, the conventional disguise becomes essential both to the plot and to the basic idea of *Twelfth Night*.

Viola is most explicit as to the reasons for concealing her identity in man's clothing. Both she and the audience understand clearly the motive of her act; there is no self-deception involved. Yet this disguise, innocently undertaken for the best of reasons, works a certain amount of havoc. Poor Olivia is so charmed by Viola's "outside" that she loses her heart to a dream.

The question of truth is raised at once by Viola upon meeting Olivia. Olivia,

you will recall, is "disguised"; Maria has thrown a veil over her face. To this veil Viola cannot address her prepared speech, since it refers to the beauty of the addressee, and at her request the veil is withdrawn that she may look at the picture. Her reaction is one of Shakespeare's most famous comic lines: "Excellently done, if God did all." It is a good joke, but it is more: it is related to the central idea of God's handiwork gilded and distorted by the artifices of man. God has made Olivia beautiful and has also given her a natural function, but this she is apparently determined to avoid through her foolish decision to yield to "no kind of suit; No, not the Duke's."

Feste, too, is disguised both in costume and in behavior. His suit is motley, the uniform of the Fool, and he carries the tabor and perhaps the bauble as his badge of office. When, however, Olivia calls him a fool—and we must return to this scene again—he points out that

"cucullus non facit monachum." And as the man inside the monk's robe may be anything but a monk in spirit, so he, Feste, wears not motley in his brain. His disguise, like Viola's, is a kind of protection; he is an allowed fool and may speak frankly what other men, in other disguises, must say only to themselves.

Two characters only in the play are notably undisguised. Sir Toby scorns to pretend that he is anything but what he appears, and Sebastian exposes his identity openly on his first entrance. Sir Toby, to be sure, is frequently a little disguised by wine, yet his drunkenness only emphasizes his characteristic attitude: "Is this a world to hide virtues in?" He is disgusted with his niece for her foolish behavior, he flouts Malvolio as a poseur, and he savors freely all the good things, the cakes and ale, that life has

to offer. The audience cannot fail to recognize in him a familiar type, taking life as it comes "all most natural," Maria's pun not intended.

Disguise, of course, is not merely a matter of costume and pose. When Viola informs her master that she is all the daughters of her father's house and all the brothers too, she is masking her meaning in words, in a riddle. "A fustian riddle" betrays Malvolio, and in the second wooing scene between Olivia and Viola there occurs a passage of stichomythia, a device of dialogue that had its origin in riddling speech:

OLIVIA: I prithee tell me what thou thinkst of me.

VIOLA: That you do think you are not what you are.

OLIVIA: If I think so, I think the same of you.

VIOLA: Then think you right. I am not what I am.

It is by words alone that Sir Toby maintains his ascendancy over Sir Andrew, by pun and false logic and sheer volubility convincing him that he is not what he is, an asshead and a coxcomb and a knave. By words alone he brings about the duel between Andrew and Viola and so fills each fencer with false ideas of the other's skill that both are defeated before a sword has been crossed. His facility with words traps him at last, bringing him into open conflict with Antonio and with Sebastian and forcing the surrender of his freedom to Maria as recompense for her own cleverness in trapping Malvolio with a riddling letter.

Feste's whole art and function depend upon his talents as a "notable corrupter of words," and he has much wisdom to utter on what we should probably call the problem of semantics. He concludes one wit combat by declaring that "words

are grown so false that I am loath to prove reason with them." In many ways he is the central figure of the play, the symbol of its meaning. The plot could get on without him, no doubt; his practical function as message-bearer could be taken over by Fabian, who has little enough to keep him busy. But he is no mere embellishment. Without Feste, *Twelfth Night* would not be the enduring comedy it is but another romantic farce like *The Comedy of Errors*. Twelfth Night is Feste's night.

"A WISE MAN'S ART"

The Fool is as conventional in Shakespearean comedy as the intriguing slave or parasite in Plautus or Molière. But, while Feste shares some of the characteristics of Tranio-Phormio-Sganarelle, he does not, like them, dazzle our eyes by juggling the elements of the plot into a complex pattern which only he can sort out for the necessary fortunate conclusion. Until the last act of the play, he does little but jest or sing. But for all his failure to take a positive part in the intrigue—emphasized perhaps when he drops out of the baiting of Malvolio—for all that he is not, that is to say, a protagonist, he nonetheless propounds the theme which gives *Twelfth Night* its unity and makes a single work of art out of what might have been a gorgeous patchwork.

A brief examination of the matter of the comedy will suggest the basis for such a conclusion. *Twelfth Night* is compounded of two, perhaps three, "plots," more or less independent actions, each of which must be rounded off before the play is concluded. In the first, Duke Orsino's eyes must be opened to the true nature of love that he may marry Viola; in the second, Malvolio must be reduced from the deluded superman to fallible hu-

manity; in the third, which is closely tied with the first, Sebastian must be substituted for Viola in the affections of Olivia.

The structure is skilfully contrived not only to keep all three plots going and maintain a reasonable connection among them but to emphasize the similarity of their themes. Like most panoramic drama, the play may be divided into three organic movements rather than the meaningless editorial division into five acts. The first of these movements, from the introduction of Orsino to Viola's discovery that she has charmed Olivia (I, 1—II, 3), is concerned almost exclusively with establishing the triangular love affair. Toby, Andrew, and Maria are brought on to whet our appetites for their plot, and, just before the movement ends, Sebastian appears that we may be reassured all will come right before the play is over. However, we should note a speech of Feste's made to Maria during his first appearance (I, 5), in which he refers obliquely to the common subject of the separate actions: "If Sir Toby would leave drinking, thou wert as witty a piece of Eve's flesh as any in Illyria." If all were as it should be and according to the order of nature, Toby would wed Maria. But Toby drinks, and the Duke loves Olivia, and Olivia (as we shall see in a moment) loves Viola. All most *unnatural*.

In the second movement (II, 3—IV, 1) the love triangle remains unchanged, and the trapping of Malvolio occupies most of the action. We observe the offense for which he is to be punished, the plotting of revenge, and the success of the scheme. Sebastian has again made only a token appearance, but in the final scene of the movement (III, 4) all three actions are brought together with the greatest of ease as the deluded Malvolio is handed

over to Toby, and Andrew and Viola are inveigled into a duel from which both are rescued by the intervention and arrest of Sebastian's friend, Antonio.

The final movement, the last two acts of the play, is in a sense Sebastian's. Mistaken for Viola, he brings about a fortunate unknotting of the love tangle, rescues his friend Antonio from the clutches of the Duke, and forces a confession of their machinations from Toby and company. The point to notice here is that Feste is the character who, innocently enough, drives Sebastian into Olivia's arms. It is Feste's only direct contribution to the action of the play; it is also the single decisive action which cuts the comic knot; and it is a visual dramatic symbol of his relationship to the whole play. It is the action of a man whose professional function is to perceive and declare the true state of affairs in the face of scorn, threats, and discouragement from the self-deluded. Shakespeare has in fact prepared us for this action at several important points earlier in the play.

On his first appearance, with Maria, Feste demonstrates not only that he is able to more than hold his own in a wit combat but that he is shrewd enough to see the true state of affairs in the household. A moment later, with the license of an allowed fool, he is demonstrating to Olivia the folly of her resolution to withdraw from the world for seven years in mourning for her brother.

FESTE: Good madonna, why mournest thou?  
OLIVIA: Good fool, for my brother's death.

FESTE: I think his soul is in hell, madonna.

OLIVIA: I know his soul is in heaven, fool.

FESTE: The more fool, madonna, to mourn for your brother's soul, being in heaven. Take away the fool, gentlemen [I, 5, 72-78].

The little passage is in the most artificial of dialogue forms, stichomythia, and it is

perhaps only a bit of logic-chopping, but it presents the common-sense view of a sentimental and un-Christian attitude.

The exposure of Olivia takes place in the first movement of the play. In the second movement Feste undertakes to tell the Duke a few plain truths, but, since the undeeceiving of the mighty is ticklish business, he goes about it in an oblique manner.

Shakespeare has introduced the Duke in a most ambiguous way. To him falls an opening speech as rich in texture and sound as any love poetry in the language. To him also falls an attitude that cannot fail to win both our admiration and our exasperation. We admire his constancy, that is, but are somewhat impatient with his refusal to "take his answer." Further, if we accept him at his own evaluation as presented in his speeches, his sudden switch to Viola in the last scene becomes pure comic convention without reason or meaning, a botched-up happy ending.

But, if we have been beguiled by our own sentimentality into sympathy with the Duke, Feste will set us right, and most particularly in that romantic scene (II, 4) where he has been thrust in to sing the song which Viola seems not prepared to perform.<sup>2</sup> It is as early in the morning as the love-smitten Duke would arise from bed. He enters, calling at once for music, and requests Cesario (that is,

\* There has been much ingenuity expended on the search for an explanation for this awkward *non sequitur*. Possibly, we are dealing with a revision of the text in which the boy new-cast for Viola was less versatile than his predecessor. In that case the present interpretation is a further demonstration of the playwright's skill in making a virtue of necessity. It is intriguing also to speculate that, since Feste sings all the other songs in the play, Shakespeare in revising took this opportunity of tightening up his structure. But, barring the resurrection of Ireland or Collier, proof for such hypotheses can never be forthcoming, and, however happily we would welcome it, it is of secondary importance in dealing with a work of art as an entity in itself.

Viola) for that "old and antique song" they heard last night. While his servant Curio goes in search of Feste to sing it, Orsino proceeds to analyze it for us. The description is famous and explicit:

It is old and plain,  
The spinsters and the knitters in the sun,  
And the free maids that weave their thread with  
bones,  
Do use to chant it. It is silly sooth,  
And dallies with the innocence of love  
Like the old age [II, 4, 44-49].

That is, a simple song, presumably a folk song or ballad, fit accompaniment to a household task. It is a love song, but not impassioned, not from the point of view of fervent youth. It dallies with the harmless pleasure of love as if the experience were but the memory of the old, a memory recollected in tranquility. Whereupon Feste sings:

Come away, come away, death,  
And in sad cypress let me be laid.  
Fly away, fly away, breath;  
I'm slain by a fair cruel maid.  
My shroud of white, stuck all with yew,  
O prepare it!  
My part of death, no one so true  
Did share it.

In the second stanza the love imagery becomes more extravagant.

Not a flower, not a flower sweet,  
On my black coffin let there be strown;  
Not a friend, not a friend greet  
My poor corpse, where my bones shall be  
thrown.  
A thousand, thousand sighs to save,  
Lay me, O where  
Sad, true lover ne'er find my grave,  
To weep there.

Without the original music, which cannot be traced, it is impossible to say for certain, but, from the striking difference between the song as anticipated and the song as sung, Feste seems to have been mocking, indirectly, the Duke's passion. "Come away, death" is indeed a love

song, but it can hardly be said to dally with the innocence of love. This would explain the Duke's abrupt, "There's for thy pains," and his immediate dismissal, not only of the singer,<sup>3</sup> but of his entire court. Perhaps he is afraid that there may have been some sniggering behind his back as Feste sang. There is just a hint in the play that his household is a little wearied of his unavailing pursuit of Olivia.

And Feste, going off, dares a parting thrust. "Now the melancholy god protect thee," he says, and bids him put to sea to make a good voyage of nothing. In this scene, I suggest, Feste "exposes" the Duke as he has earlier exposed Olivia. By mocking them both, he points out that their loves are sentimental and foolish. And the Duke, unlike Olivia, is angry. He dismisses his attendants and sends Viola once more to "same sovereign cruelty," with a stubborn determination to act out the role he has cast himself in.

With this as a clue to his character, the actor of course has it in his power to make evident the Duke's melancholy, his fashionable love-sickness, from the start. In the first scene, even in his gorgeous opening set-piece, he is plainly worshiping love for its own sake and fostering his emotion for sentimental purposes. His first words demand that the music play on, that he may experience again his pleasurable mood of Thwarted Lover. For all the beauty of the verse, the attitude is distinctly unhealthy. He must have music for his love to feed on, even upon arising in the morning; or, for a substitute, a garden of sweet-scented flowers. And is he not, like Romeo in the throes of puppy love for the equally un-

<sup>3</sup> With a formula which is exactly duplicated only in Henry IV's angry dismissal of his insubordinate nobles.

responsive Rosaline, "best when least in company"?

The parallel exposing of Malvolio, which is capped by Feste in the third movement, is the clearest statement of the theme in action, since it is unencumbered by romantic love, an element which can blind an audience to the true state of affairs as effectively as it can blind the romantic lovers. Malvolio, in this play, is plain text. As Olivia's steward he is sufficiently in charge of her affairs to bring suit against a sea captain for dereliction of duty; as her butler, he is ready with falsehoods to defend her privacy; as her would-be husband, he has prepared schemes for the proper and efficient conduct of their household. These are all admirable traits for his several capacities: the alert businessman, the devoted servant, the careful husband. But there is a fault in him, an obvious fault. There is something too much of the cold gaze from half-shut eyes down the prominent beak, something too much of the demure travel of regard. Malvolio would not only be virtuous, he would have others so, and he would define the term. It is a cause of delight to discover that the elegant creature with snow-broth in his veins, so superior to the drunken carousing of Toby, the witty trifling of Feste, the dalliance of Olivia—that this man of virtue is only human, like ourselves. And in this exposure, that the whirligig of time may bring his revenges, Feste is permitted to play the visually dominant part.

The action is so arranged that, of all the conspirators, only Feste has a scene alone with Malvolio, in which, for nobody's pleasure but his own, he teases and torments the benighted steward and reduces the proud man to a state of wretched groveling: "I tell thee," cries

Malvolio at last, "I am as well in my wits as any man in Illyria," and Feste replies, "Well-a-day that you were, sir."

This does not seem to be idly spoken. Feste is saying that he wishes Malvolio were not sick of self-love but like a normal Illyrian. Like Toby, for example, who would go to church in a galliard and return in a coranto, and whose fair round belly symbolizes his philosophy, that there is a place for cakes and ale even in a world turning Puritan. The point is made simply and emphatically, with Feste *solas* on the stage, and Malvolio perhaps clamoring behind the Judas window of the stage door: the Elizabethan equivalent of a motion-picture close-up—on Feste.

Thus it is Feste's function in both parts of the action to make plain to the audience the artificial, foolish attitudes of the principal figures. Malvolio loves himself, Orsino loves love, and Olivia loves a ghost. This, says Feste, is unnatural, against common sense. In this similarity of situation and Feste's single-minded attitude in each case lies the unity of *Twelfth Night*, its theme.

Feste states it clearly. Since he is primarily a singing fool, he states it in song:

What is love? 'Tis not hereafter;  
Present mirth hath present laughter. . . .  
Youth's a stuff will not endure.

Feste's philosophy is as old as the hills, as old as the comic attitude, the acceptance of the facts of life. His philosophy, however, goes somewhat deeper than a mere sentimental optimism.

Journeys end in lovers' meeting  
Every wise man's son doth know.

As a wise man's son, or as an understanding fool, he sees to it that there shall be a meeting of true lovers at the end of the journey of Viola and Sebastian. In his scene with Malvolio he

even discards his priestly disguise and appears in his own motley to restore the vision of the self-blinded man. And, by his introduction of Sebastian to Olivia, he makes possible the shedding of all disguises both physical and spiritual at the dénouement.

Critical opinion has been somewhat divided about Feste. There is general agreement about his remarkable clean-spokenness; he has been called the merriest of Shakespeare's fools, and the loneliest. He has been taken to be the symbol of misrule that governs the Twelfth Night activities. Yet, when the recognition scene is over, all the characters romantically paired off, Malvolio reduced to a very human bellow—"I'll be revenged on the whole pack of you!"—and Feste prepares to sing his foolish little epilogue, does he not seem to be something more than merry, or lonely, or the spirit of misrule?

Observe him, alone on the great stage which is the emptier for the departure of the grandly dressed ladies and gentlemen who have crowded it during the last scene, and the quieter after the vigorous excitement that attended the dénouement: the twins united, the marriage and betrothal, the explosion of Malvolio, the brawling of Andrew and Toby. Feste is perhaps older than the other characters, "a fool that the Lady Olivia's father took much delight in." But he has been, for a fool, a rather quiet character; no loud, bawdy jokes and very little slapstick. His brain is not parti-colored: *cucullus non facit monachum*. As Viola observes:

This fellow's wise enough to play the fool,  
And to do that well craves a kind of wit.  
He must observe their mood on whom he jests,

The quality of persons and the time;  
Not, like the haggard, check at every feather  
That comes before his eye. This is a practice  
As full of labor as a wise man's art.

It is the function of this fool to speak the truth, however quizzically he must phrase it. It is his task to persuade his lord and lady *not* to be fools. It is the task of comedy, too.

And now he is alone. Now he sings his lonely, foolish song:

When that I was and a little tiny boy  
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain, etc.

Perhaps it is not so foolish. There is one constant thing in this world, he says, the facts of nature, the wind and the rain that raineth every day. Thieves may be shut out and evil men by bars and locks but not the rain that raineth every day. Like a true jester, he makes a little joke out of his moral. When he took a wife, he planned to be master in his own house, but nature defeated him, for it is the order of nature that men shall be henpecked, and suffer from hangovers, as surely as the rain shall fall. He emphasizes the antiquity of his wisdom:

A great while ago, the world began  
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain.

Then, with a quizzical smile, as if to say, "I have made my point, or the comedy has made it for me; no need to quote history—" he slips into the epilogue pattern we have been awaiting:

But that's all one, our play is done,  
And we'll strive to please you every day.

It is, after all, as he reminds us, just a play. But it has its purpose for being, just as the great tragedies have. *Twelfth Night* is Feste's night, and we may look to be well edified when the Fool delivers the Madmen.

## *Great Books in the English Curriculum<sup>1</sup>*

DOROTHY BETHURUM<sup>2</sup>

THOSE who take issue with the advocates of teaching in the English curriculum the world's great books are in a most dangerous position. No mercy will be shown to anyone in academic life who announces that he is opposed to reading the Great Books. Professional pride, if nothing else, would make us all avoid such a position. The question is not whether we want to teach the St. John's or Chicago list but when and where and how, and it is to that subject that I wish to address myself.

We are discussing, I take it, the place of a course of this kind in the English curriculum. We are not talking about a course in philosophy, in which it is necessary to discover Plato's, Locke's, or Aquinas' ideas in any way we can, nor are we talking about "The Classics in Translation," nor about "A Survey of World Literature"; and if I must express an opinion on whether I think it good to teach Plato, Aristophanes, Machiavelli, and the *Federalist Papers* in the English curriculum, I must say I do not think it is—at least not directly and not as the primary material. Nor do I think it a good idea to teach all the Columbia list in any one course, but of that later.

I will make one concession in the beginning, and that is that for the first few years such a course has the admirable effect of keeping its teachers exhilarated,

<sup>1</sup> Read at a meeting of the New York Council of College Teachers of English, New York University, April, 1951.

<sup>2</sup> Connecticut College.

keyed up, even working at their maximum efficiency and learning fast, and in education that is half the battle. If this effect only lasted longer, I should have fewer objections to the program than I have; but when year after year the teachers break their heads against the block of their own linguistic inadequacy, the effect is not stimulating but frustrating.

But to come to the point, which is: Is this the best way to educate students? In other words, will you substitute this sort of course for one in the major English poets? The reason I am unwilling to do it is that literature is one of the arts and works like one. It is not philosophy. It uses ideas and philosophical systems, but it uses them for something else—for emotional discovery and realignment. It effects an emotional transformation, usually, I suspect, by the catharsis of pity and fear, no matter what the form, and the releasing of love. It takes the ideas and sets them on fire with emotional potency so that truth is carried alive into the heart by passion.

How does it work this transformation? I suspect that, as Wordsworth said, poetry has devised a means of physical stimulation so that the blood flows faster and the chemistry of the body is slightly altered when one is under its spell. Whatever may be the truth of that, it keys us up in some way so that we are more receptive than usual and under its stimulus make a better organization of experience than it is otherwise within our

power to make. To bring this about, it engages in a kind of incantation.

The most obvious form of this incantation is the beat of the rhythm in either verse or prose, clearly more important in verse, by variations in the beat, by the sound of the words, indeed by all the figures of sound known to ancient and modern rhetoric. This is purely sensuous, and, where it is supremely done, invariable. That is, you cannot substitute one sound for another and get the same effect. That effect cannot, I fear, be completely analyzed. On the plane of ideas it works by suggestion, by the associations of the words, by symbols, by hyperbole; and this likewise is a complex process, not entirely understood. We may, however, go a little way toward understanding it by observing what we are asked to attend to as we read a poem. As John Ransom has had us notice, a poet keeps a number of things going at once. He has a main attraction, and at the same time he has a number of competing side shows, to which we must attend if we are to get his total meaning. The main show is the onward march of the plot, if it is drama or fiction, of the argument whatever the form. The side shows beat upon us in the form of metaphor, bringing into consciousness many disparate and seemingly irrelevant matters, all of which contribute to the enrichment of the main idea. It takes a high degree of sensitivity and a great deal of knowledge to respond richly to a great poet.

Let me illustrate by Milton, whose demands upon us are outrageous because his explicit organization of experience is probably the largest attempted by any English poet. The argument of *Paradise Lost* flows on with relentless urgency in the sweep of Milton's uninterrupted sentences, and we must keep up with the current or be drowned. At the same time

there beat upon us from the side all the deities of the pagan world and their fables, odors from the Sabean shore, light from the heavenly constellations, bizarre geographical names, freight from the ends of the earth. This too we must take as we go along, because it is as important as the main argument. Every pore must be open, every accent listened to. For *Paradise Lost* does not "mean" just the story of how Satan deceived man and had his triumph turned to defeat. It means the total experience of man subsumed under the Christian argument, and this Milton can express only by bringing in, in every way known to sound and sense, all the other organizations of man and of nature, until the fair fields of Enna transfer their glories to Eden, and Proserpine gathering flowers yields to the flower of grace gathered unwittingly by Eve.

Another device of the poet is hyperbole, and this arises, I think, out of the very limitation of poetry. Lessing pointed out, you remember, that painting, which is extended in space but not in time, is suitable to description, for it can represent what the eye can take in at a glance with the details simultaneously given as they are when we look at a face or at a landscape. Poetry, on the other hand, is extended in time but not in space and is suitable for the narration of events, which likewise occur in temporal succession. Painting cannot easily or naturally tell a story or poetry describe a scene. But poetry gets around that limitation by using hyperbole, stabbing you into consciousness and effecting a quick and powerful organization. Not only does it enable the poet to describe, in the limited sense of that word, but it enables him to transcend the very nature of time wherever it limits our powers of synthesis. In other words, it is in the

very necessities of the art. But—and this is the important part—hyperbole is effective only in concrete definite terms which are reinforced by suggestion of every sort. It must reach deep into the roots of our experience to be successful. For example, Shakespeare's line, "Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds," gets its effect by the associations of the words, and anyone coming to English from a foreign language would need a very intimate knowledge to take over the associations of "fester" and "weeds" and get the sense of the corruption of the beautiful that line suggests.

It is clear that the only way to get a poem's meaning is to hear the lines, the pace of the meter, and to allow the suggestions of the words to do their full work. In other words, it is utterly impossible to get it in a translation. I would not labor so obvious a point if the whole case for the kind of course we are discussing did not rest upon ignoring just this. Philosophy can perhaps be got without too much loss in translation. Scientific treatises can be translated. But literature cannot be. I do not say that it is totally idle to read a translation of the *Iliad* or of the *Aeneid*, but certainly one is not then reading the *Iliad* or the *Aeneid*, and our problem is to decide whether to read translations of many fine poems in preference to really reading a few. We fool ourselves if we think this is not true, for we are impressed by what we get, for instance, of the *Divine Comedy* in English; but I suggest that anyone who doubts what I am saying try reading *Midsummer Night's Dream* in German or French.

I will take an easier case. Schlegel's translations of Shakespeare are justly famous. They are made *con amore* and with fine feeling for the English lines.

But simply take the most renowned of all lines and put it into German:

Sein oder Nichtsein: das ist hier die Frage.

Both "Sein" and "Nichtsein" carry a heavy weight of metaphysical association that could have been no part of Hamlet's dilemma. The dark cloud of Kant hangs over the words. So great a difference is there between two languages, one of which has an infinitive and a gerund, the other of which makes one form do service for both. I have seen good German translations of some of Tennyson's lyrics; that is, the German poems were good poems, and good in the same way the English were, but there was not much to be lost in depth and power where they were not wholly successful. My point is that this distortion is present all the time in translations from other languages into English, but we do not feel it so keenly simply because we do not know the other language so well. One line, a famous one of Vergil's, will perhaps suggest it:

*Forsan et haec olim meminisse iuvabit.*

No translation—"perhaps some time it will be sweet to remember even these things"—can possibly reproduce the effect of the caesura and the flow of *meminisse iuvabit* or the paradox of past and future in *olim*.

Most translations are like the sausages you see on the present English menus. They look like sausage and they smell like sausage, but, when you eat them, you discover they are only oatmeal.

That is the reason I am opposed to substituting for a good course in English literature one in the great literature of the world. Another reason is the desperate pace at which these courses are usually conducted. I may not have the timing exactly right, but I believe the

Columbia course devotes four days to the *Aeneid*, four to five of Sophocles' plays, nine to five of Shakespeare's plays, one of them *King Lear*. I do not for a moment deny that it is a good thing to read through an English translation of the *Aeneid* in whatever time it takes to read it, but I cannot believe the residuum from such a reading will be very large after a few years have passed, nor will the student have even the memory of a real literary experience.

The trouble with the great books is that they are great. That means, when it is literature we are talking about, that they are complicated and difficult, and they are likely to resist the casual approach. Sometimes, as with Dante and Homer, there is a simple homeliness about the language that will shock the uninitiated, and you must stay with them long enough to realize that that is not the whole story. Sometimes, as with Chaucer, the finish is so high and bright that the beginning student takes the work for its surface value and does not see the irony behind the deceptive polish. He has to have time to get it.

Furthermore, the great books are conditioned by time and place. That is not really the way to say it: they are created in a certain environment, are a part of that environment, and the environment is a part of them. In other words, they are written in a particular language, that of their time and place, and their meaning cannot be known unless that language is known. It is likely that in many cases we can never know it perfectly, of course, but to make no attempt to know it at all is to be guilty of wilful blindness. Machiavelli's *Prince* is on the Chicago and Columbia lists and is a good illustration of this point, for it is a particularly timely book just now. It is also a book that it is pos-

sible to misunderstand completely if you know nothing of the organization of the Italian communes, nothing of Florentine politics, nothing of the character of Cesare Borgia. When this objection was raised in the *Saturday Review* to the study of *The Prince* in a program of this kind, one of its leaders answered, I believe, that a knowledge of Missouri politics was sufficient to enable anyone to understand *The Prince*. I am sure that Missouri politics is rich in Machiavellian overtones, but I doubt that it offers the final illumination for *The Prince*. It is more likely to result in Gentillet's reading of that work than in Machiavelli's.

One further point. I would be willing to risk many of these dangers if we had teachers of adequate linguistic equipment to teach the world's great literature. I would make a concession to students who cannot learn Italian, Greek, Latin, and German well enough to read Dante, Sophocles, Horace, and Goethe, if their instructors could and were themselves aware of what the poems really say. But flatter ourselves as we may, we know that few of us can do it. For several years, with rather shaky Italian and a great deal of enthusiasm, I boldly conducted tutorial sessions in the *Inferno* and the *Purgatorio*, among other things, for which I ought probably to spend several eons in the latter place. In all honesty I have to confess I'd better stick to Chaucer and let my students study Dante under an instructor qualified to teach him.

But these objections aside, if we had world enough and time it would be perfectly possible to get an education and a very good one simply by reading the great books in almost any order and without secondary helps. But we are talking now about a college education—

four years and how best to spend them, and we may as well face what the choices are. The advocates of this method in a college curriculum nearly always say, when other pleas fail, "Are you willing to let students leave college who know nothing of Racine, Homer, and Cervantes?" This is supposed to be a rhetorical question, but I am ready to answer it with an unblushing "Yes." If we must choose, as indeed we must, between, on the one hand, having them really study the plays of Shakespeare and of Molière, in the language in which they were written, and, on the other hand, get only a speaking acquaintance with these two, plus a nod in the direction of Aristophanes, Schiller, Plautus, and Calderon, I prefer the former.

This is the heart of the problem. I think it is more valuable for students to learn how to read while they are in college than to do anything else, and if they get some idea of the riches of one literature, besides their own, and some experience with trying to know a few figures, they have at least a standard against which to measure their reading for the rest of their lives. Any curriculum is a compromise, and we must admit, of course, that they are not going to "learn" even the major English poets. My plea is that, within the possibilities of their own maturity, powers, and experience they aim at doing as thorough a job as they can.

And now I would like to invoke a few big words like "democracy" and "integration." Democracy first. The concessions of education to democracy must be and have been enormous. I don't know any way around this. If we wish to give a college education to a hundred thousand people instead of to ten thousand—and we certainly do—we cannot impose the rigid requirements on them that we could impose on the upper ten thousand.

Whether the American faith in universal education has been entirely justified I am not prepared to say. When I see the vogue of McCarthyism and the general retreat of the intellectuals, I have some doubt. But, be that as it may, we would all agree, I suppose, that the problem in education is the same as that in other aspects of the democratic experiment—to keep some kind of aristocracy in learning to set the standard, not to water down everything to the capacity of the average; and what we need now is a tightening-up of the process, more stringent demands for real learning, harder subject matter, more mature methods of teaching. I am sure our students would respond to less pedagogy and more concern with the subject matter they are studying. Doubtless the advocates of the program I am discussing would say that is exactly what they are proposing. But I am not so sure. You cannot make the kind of demands I am talking about, in the teaching of literature certainly, except by actually facing this indissoluble union of form and content, not by abstracting ideas and trying to teach those.

That is a hard fact that our optimism has not been willing to accept. Our reasoning runs something like this: It is desirable for as many people as possible to attend college. College education ought to introduce people to the classics, to the world's great books. Therefore, our entire college population should read the world's great books. I am not now raising the question of their innate intellectual ability. I am only saying that this notion does not go hand in hand with our American scorn of foreign languages or with the crowded American curriculums, both in secondary schools and in colleges. The choice is really: "Shall our students in secondary schools get the equipment to read the world's great

books, or shall they learn civics, manual training, newspaper editing, etc.?" That subject is not before us, but you cannot, on the one hand, have the secondary schools paying less and less attention to linguistic training, and, on the other hand, the colleges putting in a complete curriculum of the kind we are now discussing. The one cancels out the other. Of all the concessions to the democratic idea, this course in Great Books is the boldest. The danger, of course, is that students who have gone through such a course think they know Dante, Milton, Aristophanes, *et al.* It is in letting them think this that the greatest menace lies. Nothing can take the place of excellence in learning. Our whole major system, probably the most successful thing we have worked out in American colleges, rests upon the belief that doing the best he can with one subject is worth a third or a fourth of a student's time in college, and, while I do not think our majors beyond criticism, I would be very reluctant to give up this gain.

The other big word I want to deal with is "integration," a word which, as Leslie Stephens said 'about "nature,"' is designed to introduce confusion into any discussion of art, politics, or education. I sometimes wish we could delete it from the English vocabulary and send it as a present to Stelin, who is equipped to deal with it. The only thing I want to say about it is that it takes place in *one* head. You cannot have a course in it. One person cannot do it for another. And putting together into one course the world's great literature does not "integrate" the student's knowledge of whatever literature he knows. He will do just as good a job by bringing from his French class to his English whatever knowledge he has of French literature, for, no matter how well his instructor is aware of the relation of the two literatures, the stu-

dent learns it only when he puts two and two together for himself and gets five. Our students think any course marked "core" has some sacramental effect like the water of baptism, cleansing them of their old confusions and bestowing upon them a new illumination by means of which they see how things really are. But, alas, the grace of wisdom does not come quite like that.

One can sympathize, however, with the original impulse back of Erskine's first course of this kind at Columbia—a profound dissatisfaction with the results of the free elective system and a realization that an attempt must be made to consolidate our Western tradition and see that students learn its essentials while they are in college. The danger is in supposing that there is some reducible essence that can be extracted from the world's literature and given students in concentrated form. It is customary for advocates of these courses to deplore the tendency of English departments to regard their subject matter as "mere literature," for they think philosophical truth to be a higher form of truth than artistic truth and believe that the alchemist interested in the true gold of human experience will transmute all he finds to this superior metal. Reduced to its lowest terms, that is what the argument is about. It is art versus philosophy, the concrete versus the abstract. I think any respectable curriculum will certainly require both kinds of knowledge of its students. But teachers of literature are teachers of an art, and their subject matter must be dealt with in its own terms. Its particular kind of truth is accessible only in the form in which it is incorporated. We come back to the same hard truth: if we want Homer's wisdom, we must learn Greek. There is no short cut that will lead us out of our confusion.

## *Teacher as Audience*

JEFFREY FLEECE<sup>1</sup>

FRESHMAN composition courses and, perhaps even more, communications courses have recently laid a great emphasis on the idea of purpose. Teachers have recognized that writing in a vacuum is almost bound to be bad and have tried, in devious ways, to provide an audience to which the student is actually trying to communicate something.

The usual approach, and one that is moderately successful, is to make the rest of the class the student's audience. Teachers read themes aloud or have the students read them, have students grade one another's themes, and devise assignments which require that students contribute their share to a body of knowledge which the whole class will be required to know. However, the teacher is often forced to realize that all his maneuvers are only ways of providing a different kind of artificial situation. If the student really has something he wants to say to his classmates, he will usually wait until the period is over.

The only other possible audience for the student is the teacher, his only actual audience. The theme is written for a grade, and the teacher assigns the grade. Since this situation exists, no matter how we fight it, a teacher who really believes that writing has to have a purpose must make it his business to convince his students that he is really an audience worth addressing.

The problem of developing in your students the belief that you are a person

worth talking to cannot be reduced to formulas, in Dale Carnegie fashion. Its chief obstacle, of course, arises from the too usual attitude toward teachers in general. H. L. Mencken's analysis is less of an exaggeration than we would like to believe—"No boy genuinely loves and admires his teacher; the farthest he can go, assuming him to have all of his wits, is to tolerate her as he tolerates castor oil."

Fortunately, the problem is not an all-or-nothing one, as it may appear at first. In other classes, students have become accustomed to the artificial writing situation of examination questions, in which they tell the professor what he has earlier told them. (That, of course, may be one reason why papers in other classes are generally so much more poorly written than English papers.) And, second, words themselves have a certain force which leads the person writing them to a certain amount of interest in expression, even the most recalcitrant student writing a theme for a teacher from whom he is completely alienated. But there are other devices which seem to narrow the gulf between teacher and student and make the theme more nearly, if almost never completely, an actual person-to-person statement.

The subject written about is a major controlling factor. One of the frequent complaints of teachers of composition is that their students can write very well on personal topics but that they do not seem to have an original idea or word in

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their heads when a more general topic concerned with broader issues is assigned. Perhaps the trouble is not so much that the student has nothing to say about world affairs as that he realizes he has nothing to communicate to the teacher in these more difficult areas.

When a student writes a theme about milking rattlesnakes or kissing girls, he is likely to express himself surely. His haste to communicate may cause his punctuation and spelling to deteriorate, but the content, organization, and dictation of the paper may be logical and fresh because they are controlled by a pride in his superior knowledge of the subject and a real interest in telling others—even a teacher—about it.

A *New Yorker* writer, commenting on the Flesch system, said he would just as soon Simonize his grandmother as personalize his writing, but in freshman courses what we might call "first-personalizing" is one way to encourage students to develop the habit of writing themes with real purpose. If the teacher responds to these early themes with something like real interest, a student may be willing to have a try at explaining or arguing about wider topics in something more than an artificial way.

The research-paper project is another way to provide the student with something he feels himself enough of an expert to comment on. Most freshman teachers have had the experience of suspecting that a research paper was cribbed because it was so much better than the student's usual writing, only to find by a check that it was really an honest effort. The difference in writing skill stems in large part from the student's knowledge that his research has endowed him with facts and ideas which will be new to the teacher.

It is frequently difficult to decide

whether an individual writing assignment will lead the students toward or away from a real purpose, but there will be clues in the themes indicating whether they accepted it with dull amiability as another mechanical exercise or were fired with the desire to communicate something. The chief clues are provided by the readability of the papers and the variety of approaches used, but there are others. It was not until after I had assigned a paper on the general subject of inflation that I realized it is not such a burning issue to a student as it is to the head of a family. When two students began their discussions by copying without credit the same page of their economics textbook, I could blame myself at least partly. Their cribbing came from desperation as well as laziness; they could think of nothing they knew about inflation that I did not know better. Some of the more ingenious students supplied me with comparison prices for dress goods and parts for hot rods, so I did not decide the subject was completely impossible.

The chance to write on a student's paper is, of course, the most immediate way for a teacher to show his reaction as audience. When we are busy, our comments on papers run too often only to the details of composition or structural plan without any recognition that we have paid any attention to what they said. I find this is especially true with the worst papers and the best ones—the worst ones because there is so much about writing that needs to be said, and the best ones because there seems to be no point in adding further comment to an A. But, on papers which demonstrate a real purpose, the teacher should react to the content in some way, to guarantee the student's continued confidence in his interest.

Occasionally just the right comment is difficult to find. At our school, we often get papers which express political attitudes somehow managing to fall into the tiny area to the right of the *Chicago Tribune*. The temptation is to write another theme on the back of the sheets, as a short course in political realities, but long discussions often indicate only that the student's opinions have had no effect on the teacher other than to arouse anger. I have found to my surprise that, if I merely put at the end of such a paper, "I disagree with practically everything you say here, but you state your position clearly," and bend over backward to give the student a good grade, he may come around after class, not to complain about the grade, but to discuss what he said in his theme.

This is one of the clearest indications that a teacher is accepted as an audience. When the usual question of "What did I get on my last theme?" (or, even worse, "What did you give me?") changes to "What did you think about my idea?" it means that the student has at least temporarily become so interested in convincing his audience that he has forgotten the classroom situation.

The most ticklish papers to write comments on are those rare ones in which the student accepts the teacher in complete confidence and lays bare secrets which he would not tell his own roommate. A hasty note may hurt him, and any more serious concern with the problem may put the teacher in the position of father-confessor, one which most of us feel too humble to accept happily. When a football player wrote me a theme telling me how he had decided that all the things of this world are worthless dust and ashes, the best I could offer was a feeble suggestion that

he talk it over with his priest or pastor. But I put it down simply because I had to make some response to such an intimate revelation.

Although themes like this, of course, do not bear class discussion, almost any other kind will be useful in some way for demonstration of writing principles and of the teacher's interest in their content. For some obscure reason, students almost always enjoy being pointed out as wrongdoers. Such a question as "Who was it who wrote about the big game and did not tell whether it was football or basketball until the third page?" will almost invariably get an unembarrassed admission. Questions can also be tailored to the interests shown in themes—"Willis, give us four sense-impression words that describe the pelts of the mink you used to raise." Examples from themes written in previous classes serve the same purpose, in this case usually especially good themes. When we explain a point about organization by citing an actual theme written three years before, it lets the students know that some papers are not written only for the grade book.

I have one other device, which I hesitate to recommend, because it usually gets me into some trouble at the end of every semester—the heretical practice of using grades to express a personal response rather than an objective evaluation. If a student on the ragged edge gets excited about a subject for the first time, I will usually give him a "B+" rather than the "C+" the paper deserves. If that paper turns out to be the only one of its kind, he may come around to complain about his final "D" because he knows he got one good grade. However, on enough occasions the device works to make students actually earn better grades that I am willing to

suffer this end-of-the-semester discomfiture.

If an excellent student turns out a dull, mechanical theme, his grade is usually lower than I could justify in court, too. This grade-juggling for effect makes my grade book a startling document at the end of the semester, even to me, but I am certain that it is good pedagogy, if not good statistics.

The greatest danger which may appear to arise from the concept of teacher as audience is that the teacher may feel he must lower his own standards to find a rapport with the student mind. But this is true only when the teacher demands expert discussion of subjects which are far beyond the understanding of even the most intelligent and earnest of freshmen. The teacher who is a good audience does not necessarily allow the students to write exclusively about their own social and emotional worlds, nor does he pass everyone who manages to sound enthusiastic. He may sometimes be forced to give up the idea of real purpose for the artificial one which prevails on examinations in other subjects. But he is continually searching for assignments which will make the students feel that they have something to tell him, and, except for the social necessi-

ties, he will try to show that his criticisms of errors in mechanics, diction, and the other details of composition arise from the fact that they decrease his enjoyment or obscure his understanding of the real message that he is trying to get from his students.

Actually, an absolutely complete atmosphere of communication is set up so infrequently that it may shock us when it arrives. One of my students last semester finished a class theme on "A Discovery I Have Made since I Came to College" with twenty minutes of the period left. He asked me if he could leave, and I answered by saying, "Another discovery I have made is. . . ."

He scowled for a moment, then grinned directly at me and went to work on another paragraph. It turned out to be the best paragraph he had written all semester, full of detail and even a certain amount of artistically successful sentence rhythm. I have kept that paragraph because one sentence, in the middle of it, began, "I'm telling you, Jeff. . . ." On the days when teaching seems to be only a sophisticated way of beating one's head against a wall, I can look at that paragraph and know that at least one student, once, wrote something directly for me as an audience.

## *World's Best Directions Writer*

KEN MACRORIE<sup>1</sup>

AS WE turned to the elevator on the third floor of the Business Associates Building at 1115-20 Horace Street, we saw the scratched black letters on the frosted glass: "Edward Zybowski—Best

Directions Writer in the World." We let the elevator go down without us.

Mr. Zybowski was willing to talk to us, he said, because at the moment he was stuck. "I've got 45 words for a label and I've got to get it down to 25."

As he spoke, he lifted the rod that held

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his paper against the typewriter roller and squinted at the words. He was ordinary-looking, about forty, the black hair at the back and sides of his head emphasizing the whiteness of the balding front part. Except for his face: it was kindly but looked mashed in.

"Not kicking about copy they gave me," he said. "Never do. More copy, more challenge to cut it till you wouldn't believe it was possible. That's what keeps customers comin' to me."

"We don't want to keep you from your work. . . ."

"That's O.K. I'm stuck. No use worryin' and worryin' over a label. Don't think consciously about it for a few hours when you're stuck. Then suddenly your unconscious comes through for you—wham! There it is. Needs only final touches. No ulcers for the writer that way."

"Inspiration?" we ventured.

"Inspiration! That's a literary myth. Purely a matter of the unconscious memories and tips your mind has stored up. Then they spill over."

"This job's more than just writing," he said. "Deciding position and size of type very important." He picked up a brightly colored jar lid. "Ad on top for radio program, see? Where's the direction? On side of lid where you put your fingers to open it. Why there? Most logical place in the world."

We read the instructions printed in blue along the fluted edge:

AFTER OPENING, KEEP IN REFRIGERATOR  
DO NOT FREEZE

"You're opening the jar," he said, "and you see the word OPENING. Stops you, doesn't it? Same thing appears on other side of lid. Don't ordinarily believe in presenting any direction twice, but got to

here. So important—food'll spoil if you don't follow these directions."

"We're just curious, Mr. Zybowski. What is difficult about writing a direction like that? Seems the only way one could say this idea."

Mr. Z. looked affronted for a second, then smiled. "Yeah, no one can see it at first. And that's really a compliment to me. Shows I did it the simplest and most natural way it could be done. Now take this jar-lid direction—copy came to me like this:

"When stored at normal refrigerator temperature this food will retain its taste, lightness, color, and value as a food product; but when exposed to air or kept at freezing temperature will suffer a chemical change which may render it unfit for human consumption. It is therefore recommended that it be kept at refrigerated temperature when not being used. However, it may be stored at room temperature safely if the lid has never been removed."

"I get that essay on the subject, figure I got a space a half an inch high around the lid, and a damned important direction. So I write:

AFTER OPENING, KEEP IN REFRIGERATOR  
DO NOT FREEZE"

Our respect for Mr. Z. was growing. "You must be quite an expert on the English language," we said.

"I hate to put it this way," he said, "but I think I know more about English usage than 90 per cent of the college teachers in the country. And also how to use English—that's a different thing, you know. Under the how-to-use part, for example, there's this business of adjectives. The college experts who think they're up on the latest, say don't use adjectives. They got it from Hemingway, they claim. I read all the books and

magazines on English, too. Almost never learn anything from them. When you got a space half an inch square facing you and an important idea to get across, you learn something about language. What was I going to say?"

"You were speaking of not using adjectives."

"Yeah. They say don't use 'em. In a way they're right. Adjectives are usually weak as hell." Without looking, he pointed to the wall behind him where hung a half-letter-size sheet of blue paper framed in black. "That one up there," he said, "has no adjectives. Shouldn't have any. It's true you should use 'em sparingly. But take this tea-bag carton." He pulled a box from a desk drawer. "After I told 'em how to make hot tea on the left panel here, then I say: 'For *perfect* iced tea, make hot tea and steep for 6 minutes.' The word *perfect* is a selling word there—plug. I don't like to write any plug angles into directions. Leave that slush to ad-writers, damn their lyin' souls. This business of mine you can be honest in. Givin' directions is really helpin' people, educatin' them."

We could see Mr. Z. was in the first glow of a long speech, but we wanted to find out how he wrote directions. So we interrupted. "We can see that it is an honorable occupation in a dirty business world. Would you mind telling us more about this tea-bag label? You said you used no adjectives except for *perfect*, but in the hot-tea instructions we see the words *warmed* teapot, *fresh*, *bubbling*, boiling water."

"Glad you mentioned it. Easy to misunderstand. You see, *warmed* teapot is what you've got to use, one of the important tricks of tea-making. So *warmed* isn't an idle little descriptive word thrown in. It's the kind of teapot you've got to use or else you don't get first-rate

tea. And the same way with *fresh*. I hate a word like that usually because it sounds like those damned ad-writers' slush. You know how you always see the word on the package when you buy five-day-old stale cupcakes in a grocery store. But when used with water, the word *fresh* means something. When water stands around, it loses a lot—loses, to be exact...." He reached for a chemical dictionary.

"Oh, don't bother," we said. "We know you're right there."

"And *bubbling*," he said, pushing the book back in the case behind him. "I'm sure you know there are many different stages of boiling, and 'bubbling' identifies the stage we want."

"Yes, so in that sense of basic meaning, you don't consider these words adjectives," we said.

"Right," he said, beaming with satisfaction as he leaned back in his chair. "One point those modern English teachers are straight on: use active verbs whenever possible. I use 'push,' 'lift,' 'scoop,' 'unscrew.' Never say anything like, 'The turn of the cap is accomplished by a twist.'" He smiled. "I would say, 'Twist cap to left.'"

"We'll have to go soon," we said. Mr. Z. looked crestfallen. "Could you show us the direction that you consider your masterpiece?"

"Well," he said, "there can be only one masterpiece done by any one artist. I couldn't pick which is best. I try not to let any of 'em get out of this office till they're at least pared to the minimum. They may not always be brilliant, but they gotta be the minimum or they don't go out."

"How about that one in the frame? Any special significance in putting it on blue paper?"

He stood up and unhooked it from the

wall. "Blue paper, use it for all final O.K.'d directions, so as not to make a mistake and let one of the earlier versions—call them scratches—get out when there's a better one been done." He held the frame out to us. "This one, I'll admit, is pretty good."

We read:

IF TOO HARD-WARM • IF TOO SOFT-COOL  
PEANUT BUTTER SOMETIMES CONTRACTS  
CAUSING AIR SPACE ON SIDE OF JAR  
THIS MAY RESULT IN A WHITE APPEARANCE  
WHICH IN NO WAY AFFECTS QUALITY OR TASTE.

"I like this one," he said, "'cause no adjectives and no plug. First line there got the concentration of a line from Milton's *Samson*, my favorite poem."

We noticed the adjective *white* before *appearance*, but knew now that it wasn't an adjective to Mr. Z. and, for that matter, to us any more. "Why so little punctuation?" we asked. "One period at the end and then only two hyphens in the first line."

"Glad you asked," he said, wiping his forehead with a handkerchief. "Damnedest thing, punctuation! Spent years mastering American English punctuation when I started this business. Had to know it first but all along thought I wouldn't use it much." He picked up the framed direction from the desk. "Didn't either."

"Now first of all, you see these words," said Mr. Z.

"BUTTER SOMETIMES CONTRACTS  
CAUSING AIR SPACE

Ordinary punctuation usage says comma before 'causing,' but I take care of that by ending one line and starting another. Never need punctuation when eye has to stop and move over and down to a new line. In first line I use hyphen instead of dash because public doesn't know hyphen from a dash anyway. Hyphen saves space, and, when you don't use both in

same copy, you don't need to differentiate between them. Remember, my context for a direction is not a chapter or a book or even a page, just the round top of a jar lid or one side of a package. Sometimes no other words except the direction. No chance for confusing with antecedents or references several pages before. And thank God! No footnotes! I won't allow any asterisks. Every explanation's gotta be complete in itself."

"How about that middle dot in the first line?" we said.

"Oh, that? I'm proud of that middle dot. Easier to see than period. A better stop really. We ought to use 'em in all writing, but you know the power of convention in usage. And this particular middle dot is in center of eight words, four on each side, with equal meaning and importance. A really logical and rational mark here, don't you think?"

We had to agree. "Anybody can see it's a very intelligent job of direction writing," we said. "There is only one thing that seems inconsistent with what you have said today."

"What's that?"

"After 'CAUSING AIR SPACE ON SIDE OF JAR,' you say 'THIS MAY RESULT.' It seems that the 'THIS' is a waste of words. Couldn't you say 'CAUSING AIR SPACE ON SIDE OF JAR AND RESULTING IN A WHITE . . . ?'"

"Good point," said Mr. Z. "A really fine point of the trade. I'm glad, though, you didn't object to 'THIS' and say it is a vague reference. Anybody can see the reference is perfectly clear. But I'll tell you why I used the 'THIS.' Gettin' to be a pretty long sentence, that one. And if you say 'RESULTING,' you have to look back to be sure what the relationship is between 'RESULTING' and 'CAUSING.' In a sense it would be no vaguer than 'THIS' in its reference, but in reality it would be

harder to follow because that kind of parallelism is not in common everyday speech use. But the 'THIS' construction is. Remember my audience is everybody. A lot of those everybodys really don't read, so you gotta talk, not write, to 'em."

"What would you say is the secret of this job, if there is one, Mr. Zybowski?"

"Funny thing," he said, "but I've thought that over a lot and come to an awfully egotistic conclusion. The secret is the same as for writing a great book or doing anything else that really gives something to people. That is to learn to put yourself in the other guy's place."

We knew nothing to say to such a statement. "It's been a pleasure," we said, getting up.

"Come in again. Sure enjoyed talkin' to you," he said.

As we got to the door, he looked up from the typewriter. "I forgot to tell you one other thing about this peanut-butter direction. Notice last phrase: 'IN NO WAY AFFECTS QUALITY OR TASTE.' That's the time I beat the ad-writers at their own game and still didn't misrepresent anything or slush the customer. The way I put it, it's a statement of fact, yet a subtle idea creeps into customer's mind that the quality and taste of this butter is exceptionally good. This time language did even more than it was expected to do."

"Goodbye," we said, shaking our head in wonder as we closed the frosted-glass door. We believed the words on it now.

### *The Student's Prayer*

Let me forget not, Father, at thy feet,  
How Life laughs all around on every side!  
Grant me the urge to glance up from my book  
And chuckle at a robin's pompous pride.

Give me recess that I may leave the class  
And wander out, away from stuffy rooms,  
To where the rain-drenched mountains stand and wait,  
And orioles flash among wistaria blooms.

If formulas and facts fill all my life,  
Of what avail these grades and these degrees?  
Oh, let me not grow stiff-necked at a desk  
So that I cannot see the Pleiades!

Teacher Divine, in thy curriculum,  
Let me elect the courses that will show  
Me how to thrill with wonder as I watch  
Thy galaxies and atoms ebb and flow.

PAUL MOWBRAY WHEELER

WINTHROP COLLEGE  
ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA

## Round Table

### COMMENDING THE STUDENT FOR WORTHY ACHIEVEMENT

Such is the mode of these censorious days,  
The art is lost of knowing how to praise.

JOHN SHEPPIELD

Most of us accept the educational principle that honest praise of work well done frequently encourages the learner and motivates him to strive for increasingly higher levels of accomplishment. That we accept this principle in theory, however, does not mean that we always act consistently in terms of it. And, yet, most of us agree that educational principles are valuable only when they are translated into action. While among different teachers and for different kinds of work the means of giving deserved commendation may vary, all of us should be just as eager to praise our students for what they do well as to criticize them adversely for what they do wrong.

In marking themes in English composition on both the high school and the college levels, I believe that my practice of calling attention to the strengths as well as the weaknesses of the students' writing has yielded worth-while results.

My procedure is really very simple. To the extent that it is possible to make marginal notations according to handbook symbols, I use these symbols. The following ones, for example, are among the seventy-eight that are found in the handbook used by my present college sophomores: *coh*, coherence; *concr*, concrete words; *fig*, figures of speech; and *paral*, parallel constructions. In marking the papers, I use both a red and a blue pencil; I check errors in red and make commendations in blue. A red *coh* or *paral* points out to the student that he has violated a principle of coherence or of parallel structure; a blue *coh* or *paral*, however,

calls his attention to a particularly effective use of one of these principles. A red *concr* indicates that a more concrete or specific expression would be preferable to the one marked; a blue *concr* commends the student for having used a certain word or expression in a particularly vivid and appropriate way.

This kind of criticism, which helps the student to become aware of both his strengths and his weaknesses, is, in my opinion, far more wholesome and more helpful than that which emphasizes only the negative aspects of his writing. The values may be summarized as follows:

1. The student is helped to see his work as a whole rather than to note only the ways in which it has failed to meet certain standards.
2. He is stimulated to improve his writing not only through eliminating his errors but also through developing still further those aspects of his work that are already good.
3. He is motivated to develop within himself a degree of self-confidence that probably could not result from a kind of criticism that calls attention only to the less effective phases of his writing.
4. He develops a more wholesome attitude toward the total evaluation of his work when he realizes that the instructor's attention is focused just as strongly upon the qualities that make for effective writing as upon those that are characteristic of ineffectiveness.
5. Just as much help is given to the student who already writes well as to the one whose work is poor or mediocre. A student who finds only blue notations and symbols on his paper, through developing the commendable qualities of his work still further, may improve as much as or more than someone who is doing inferior writing.

The idea that learners should be commended for good work certainly does not represent anything new in educational thought. All of us understand this principle and realize that if it were widely applied it would do much to improve our human re-

lationships in general. At the same time, however, we are also aware that in most of our relationships faults are more quickly recognized than virtues, that it is easier to blame than to praise, and that often we are reprobated more for our failures than applauded for our successes.

Since the method discussed here involves a basic principle of teaching, is it not highly appropriate—yes, is it not fundamental—that in all of our teaching-learning activities we be aware of this principle and act upon it?

GALEN S. BESCO

STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE  
INDIANA, PENNSYLVANIA

#### AN EXPERIENCE IN WRITING

One of my students recently made the statement that his most difficult problem in writing is "finding something to write about." To us who have taught freshman English, this complaint is not new. We have heard it many times. And we realize that it challenges us to make available situations where students will be fired with enthusiasm to write. We must present subjects that will stimulate them to express their own ideas and emotions.

How to do this is the question. So often the sensitivity, the cultural background, and that nebulous quality called "creativity" are missing from the papers we regularly receive from those who study with us. Insight into human emotions and moods is missing from their "themes." When we find, however, that our students have discovered that they have something to say and can put it into clear, vigorous form, the results are gratifying. This was the case in the following experiment.

The over-all objective for the third quarter of the course in Basic Communication at the University of Denver is that the student develop in himself attitudes and skills which will promote creativity and productivity in communication situations. For some this means of self-expression is art, for

some music, for some ceramics, for some dancing, and for some it is writing.

Basic to the philosophy of the course is the recognition that each student is an important individual and that what he says is important. There is a friendly, unrestrained atmosphere in the small classes where students, seated in a circle, learn to follow one another's thinking patterns. Here confidence expands, and the student speaks freely and honestly what he thinks, disclosing the experiences which seem important to him. It is this facile atmosphere that encourages, first, self-confidence and, then, creative writing.

Realizing how difficult it is to discover a motivation that will provoke creative expression in some manner from everyone, I searched for a poem with universal appeal. I wanted one that would suggest varied experiences to my students. Finally, I chose "Street Window" by Carl Sandburg.

The pawnshop man knows hunger  
And how far hunger has eaten the heart  
Of one who comes with an old keepsake.  
Here are wedding rings and baby bracelets,  
Scarf pins and shoe buckles, jeweled garters,  
Old-fashioned knives with inlaid handles,  
Watches of old gold and silver,  
Old coins worn with finger marks.  
They tell stories.<sup>1</sup>

After reading the poem, we described similar windows we had seen in various parts of the country and exchanged stories about our own experiences with objects found in pawnshops.

An ex-serviceman told how a saxophone of his periodically went to the pawnshop as the need for medical care or household expenses arose. The symbol of his dreams for a musical career became the mundane pawn for security between pay checks. Another young man related an exhaustive search through Chicago pawnshops for a unique serpentine ring that his mother would like, and then he told how she treasured it as a bond of devotion until her death.

<sup>1</sup> "Street Window" from *Cornhuskers* by Carl Sandburg. Copyright, 1918, by Henry Holt and Company. Copyright, 1945, by Carl Sandburg.

Their imaginations stimulated in this "warm-up" period, the class members were ready to go to work. I asked them to write, in whatever form they chose, the "stories" that the poem suggested to them. These could be true or imagined, lifelike or fantastic, or merely statements of judgment. Some of the forms suggested follow.

An impersonation or character sketch of the pawnshop man

A psychological study of a person who regularly frequents the pawnshop

A human-interest story behind one of the "keepsakes"

A feature story based upon an interview with the pawnshop man

A radio skit with the setting in the home as the husband starts out for the pawnshop

A discussion of what hunger resulting from penury does to a person

An essay slanted against or in favor of the pawnshop man

A lyric, ballad, parody, etc.

An interpretation in art, music, sculpture, etc.

The eagerness with which the papers were read during the following class period indicated the students' interest in the project. At least one member had tried each of the suggestions. In an ironic essay a G.I. attacked the pawnbroker. Three-line stanzas, poems in free verse, and parodies were attempted. Four members of the class expressed themselves through art. Five or six students, mostly girls, who had never seen such a "window" formed a group and planned a field trip. One visited the pawnshop owner; another interviewed the policeman who checks the shops daily on his rounds; and the others talked with persons who had parted with their "keepsakes." These interviews were written up as feature stories.

A student just arrived from Baghdad wrote in broken English how a friend of his, desperate for food money, was driven to offer a dearly prized keepsake in pawn. When the proprietor turned it down casually as an object of little value but offered him money for his suit, the young man was disillusioned.

A navy man who for three years served in the Philippines placed the setting of his story in Manila, where a Moro brought his package wrapped in banana leaves to the loan company. His treasure, the head, arms, and breasts of a girl, exquisitely carved in ebony, was exchanged for fifty pesos—the exact amount demanded by his creditor.

Commenting on the project after it was completed, a journalism major said, "I thought we had been given quite an assignment—to write our 'stories' from a simple little poem by Carl Sandburg. I read it a couple of times, trying to get the mood and significance and was surprised to find live characters passing before my eyes in the daily routine of a pawnshop. All the objects in the window had stories behind them. The poet must have seen them and was passing them on to the reader. It opened up a great storehouse of ideas to me."

LESSIE LEE HAGEN

#### UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

#### "ON JARGON"

I was very much interested in Robert J. Geist's account, in the April *College English*, of his teaching of Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch's "Interlude: On Jargon" to college freshmen, since I share his conviction that it is "the greatest single essay on the art of writing" and have myself made somewhat the same attempt.

Unlike Mr. Geist, I came upon "On Jargon" not as a freshman, but as a graduate student, while studying at the University of Cambridge under the supervision of none other than its author. "Q" took his supervision seriously, seeing me twice a week and reading any of my writing I chose to bring him—an invaluable, but often-times embarrassing, experience. I forget now what prompted his inquiring whether I had ever read *On the Art of Writing* and, in particular, chapter v, which was about jargon: perhaps he had come upon a suc-

cession of verbs in the passive voice. At any rate, I confessed that I had not but would—at once—and I bought the book, which I still have, its pages and cover worn from much handling.

It was to be expected that I should want to use in my teaching what I as a student had found helpful. Now and then the results pleased me; but there were always a few students who disliked the essay. "Why, the author uses jargon himself," they claimed. I tried to point out "there is metaphor: *there* is ornament: *there* is a sense of poetry"—something altogether different from jargon (I'm afraid I'm still not convinced, despite Mr. Geist's parade of examples, that there is any damaging amount of jargon in the essay)—but they would answer gleefully, "But you say yourself you don't like flowery writing."

A few years of such struggle, and I had had about enough. Then last year I decided to try "On Jargon" again, this time in my English 207, a course in expository writing. Though enrolling sophomores and sometimes a few upperclassmen, 207 is meant primarily for selected freshmen, who substitute this advanced course for the regular freshman composition. Classes are kept small, new sections being formed as needed.

The class seemed to enjoy and understand the essay. The students did well with the exercise I set—an article in straightforward, "masculine" prose and a translation of this into jargon; proved able to deal adequately with my comment "Jargon" in a margin; and began to recognize jargon, officialese, gobbledegook, and the like in their reading.

The day after I read Mr. Geist's article in *College English*, I took it along to class

and read it aloud to my students, perhaps suspecting that their acceptance of "On Jargon" had been humoring teacher.

But what I had half-expected didn't happen. Instead the class proceeded to defend the essay against Mr. Geist's friendly attack. No, they hadn't found "Q" too positive; they were tired of "by-and-large" and "for the most part." They hadn't objected to "Q's" humor as distracting; perhaps it wasn't very funny, but was a professor's supposed to be more than mildly so? In fact, they rather liked the light touch. (They cited as example the Oxford undergraduates, recent visitors to the campus, whose humor in debate had surprised and impressed them, accustomed as they were to the dead seriousness of most of our American college debaters.) Nor were they infuriated at the *logos* in Greek characters, the Latinity, and the poetical quotation; rather they envied the Cambridge students, who had listened to the essay as a lecture, their background in the classics and English literature. And, after all, "Q's" Latinity was for ornament: jargon "dallies with Latinity . . . but not for the sake of style." They certainly hadn't been bothered by his lapses into jargon, if they were lapses. Now, as for Mr. Geist—

Here it was time for me to close the discussion. I reread to them Mr. Geist's last sentence: "Let me end with the reminder that I criticize Quiller-Couch's essay only because I consider it invaluable to the student who understands it."

Somewhat mollified, my students subsided. They were sure *they* did!

VIRGINIA MYERS

BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY

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Nearly ten thousand persons are this year being exchanged with more than sixty countries for study, teaching, lecturing, and research under the various "exchange of persons" programs authorized by several public laws and administered by the Department of State.

## *The National Council at Cincinnati*

THE fortieth birthday of the National Council of Teachers of English was celebrated at its 1951 annual meeting, November 20-24, at the Hotel Sheraton Gibson, Cincinnati, Ohio. Council members to the number of 1,768, from every state in the Union and from six other countries—Canada, England, Germany, Egypt, Finland, and Sudan—participated in the convention program, focused to the theme, "English and Human Personality." Many others of the Council's 16,000 members sent greetings for the occasion.

The convention was formally opened Thanksgiving evening at the first general session. The invocation was given by Rabbi Victor E. Reichert, Rockdale Temple, Cincinnati; the welcoming greetings by Dr. Claude E. Courter, superintendent of the Cincinnati Schools. There were three speakers, the Council's president, Paul Farmer, Atlanta, Georgia, Public Schools;<sup>1</sup> the Council's president-elect, Lennox Grey, Teachers College, Columbia University;<sup>2</sup> and Max Lerner, columnist, author, and lecturer.

Mr. Lerner's subject was "Human Relations and World Peace." He believes that the world cannot achieve a real peace until its people have an international culture, and this, of course, cannot be developed without a free exchange of ideas. To Lerner's mind, the greatest danger we now face in the United States is not subversion but "the prevailing intolerance for diverse viewpoints which might lead to the sealing-up of that open-mindedness from which we have derived our strength." American

greatness has come, he thinks, not so much from what we have accomplished but from how we have done it, through an open society. This society is in danger of being closed by the pressures exerted through the psychic intensity of minority groups. "The test of a culture," he warned, "is the thing which causes the weak to yield." The function of education today, Lerner believes, is to open up communications again. He thinks that in teaching there has to be a total commitment of student and teacher to the whole play of emotions and values in literature and language. Granted this total commitment, "teachers can do more than any other group, even Congress!" As teachers we must face up to our emotions, he said, not look for ways of escape from them. "Education of the heart is one of the unfinished pieces of business of our democracy." The teacher's obligation is to the human spirit.

The highlight of the general session Friday morning was Lou La Brant's modern parable, "New Wine in Old Bottles." This paper will be published, but where, when, and how are not yet determined.

Willard C. Olson, Director of Research in Child Development, University of Michigan, discussed "The Significance of Language and Literature for Growth and Personality." He emphasized individual differences in acquiring language skills and in absorbing the culture of their society through literature. In literature he suggested that teachers strike a balance between choosing literature for all to promote stability of the culture and permitting relatively free individual choice through which each individual may profit according to his nature.

Another striking address was "Modern English and Public Affairs" by Philip M.

<sup>1</sup> For the text of this address see the February *English Journal*.

<sup>2</sup> For the text of this address see the February *English Journal*.

Stern, legislative assistant to Senator Paul M. Douglas. After describing some of the involvements caused by bureaucratic discourse, Mr. Stern stressed the need for us as teachers to send our students out as persons who can perform a job of clear communication. Some methods he suggested to help accomplish this were: have students write précis of their own writings and of other students' writings; insists on the use of specific illustrations; reward brevity. Stern also stressed the need for better communication among legislators, between the legislative and administrative branches of government, and the need for both legislators and administrators to be able to project problems in such a way that the mind of the uninitiated citizen can grasp them.

The Friday afternoon conferences were divided into two series. The first consisted of seven sectional meetings in which were analyzed various problems in "Relating English to the Development of Wholesome Personality." In a second series of fifteen sectional meetings, specific solutions to these problems were suggested and discussed.

"Problems of Motivation in Courses in Composition and Communication" was the topic of a Friday afternoon panel discussion sponsored by the Conference on College Composition and Communication. Under the chairmanship of William T. Beauchamp, of Geneseo State Teachers College, five speakers representing different types of institutions gave valuable suggestions for providing motivation in the required course. There was general agreement that motivation problems are much the same regardless of the type of institution or the type of course. Miss Edith E. Layer, of Western Reserve, struck something of a keynote when she said: "Motivating the student to explore his world and write about it honestly and with understanding, with assurance that what he writes will not be considered trivial, and, by so doing, to understand better the dignity and worth of his own personality in a world of shifting values, should produce themes that we can read without being bored. And that, to my

way of thinking, is the best indication that our motivation has been good." The papers will be assembled and printed in one of the spring issues of *College Composition and Communication*.

The annual dinner Friday night was a particularly gala affair. The specific celebration of the fortieth anniversary occupied the early part of the program. Robert C. Pooley, University of Wisconsin, presided as toastmaster with great felicity; W. Wilbur Hatfield summarized briefly the historical highlights of the Council's growth and activity and introduced the past presidents; Helen K. Mackintosh, United States Office of Education, spoke for the elementary schools; Irvin C. Poley, Germantown Friends School, for the high schools; and James F. Fullington, the Ohio State University, for the colleges.

Malcolm Cowley, critic, poet, and author, and Margaret Webster, actress, director, and author, were the special speakers for the occasion. Mr. Cowley delivered "Some Notes on the Literary Stock Exchange," discussing the fluctuating values put upon an author's work by critics. His quotations of the market prices of various authors were both entertaining and enlightening. He contrived to survey the whole contemporary literary scene. He thinks that we need more persons who stand out against the fashion of the year and form a body of independent opinion. He reminded us that teachers of English are critics, too, and that the first duty of all critics is to state the truth about books as they, themselves, see it.

Miss Webster spoke glowingly on "The Living Theater and the Younger Generation." If a civilization is without a theater, it is a barren civilization, she said. There is an electricity of communication between the actors and the audience which the remote-control media can never achieve. Young people make wonderful, responsive audiences if only they can be induced into the theater. "The teacher's problem is to bring the student to us alive; our problem is to bring the plays to them alive." Miss

Webster mourns that the habit of theater-going is dying even in New York. The managers would send more plays on the road, she said, if they could be more certain of community support. Hartford and Pittsburgh are proving the theater can be supported on a community basis. She warned, however, that the public, in whose hands lies the future of the living theater, will have to make up its mind fast and will have to work fast to save it.

At the meeting of the College Section Saturday morning, Theodore Hornberger, University of Minnesota, chairman, presided. The general topic discussed was "Articulation and the Teaching of English." The speakers were Ruth B. Bozell, Arsenal Technical High School, Indianapolis; Charles F. Van Cleve, Ball State Teachers College; and Strang Lawson, Colgate University.

In discussing ways in which articulation between high school and college freshman English might be made more effective, Miss Bozell described a procedure successfully used at her school in which a group of themes written by students preparing for college were read by the head of a university English department and later were discussed by him with members of the high school English faculty. With respect to teaching reading, Miss Bozell stressed that in high school the first aim must necessarily be accuracy. For the most part, teaching rapid reading for scanning must be left to the colleges. She pointed out what too often is forgotten—that many students have never been inside a library until they get to college. And she gently reminded college teachers that too often they are prone to accept without question student statements that they have never read a novel or written a theme in high school. Instead of blaming the high school teacher, it might be more to the point to make clear to the student that it is time he took hold of himself.

Professor Van Cleve discussed the question "What Do College Freshmen Know

about the World's Literature?" He described a testing instrument devised and used at Ball State College called "An Examination on Our Cultural Heritage from the World's Literature." It was administered to the whole freshman class and to the same group eighteen months later. The point was to try to determine how well prepared the students were on arrival and what two years on a college campus could do to the cultural patterns of the students involved. The tests were given twice, to the classes of 1948 and 1949. If one of the criteria of an educated man is an acquaintance with the literatures of the Western world, the results of the tests indicated that neither the high school preparation for college nor the first two years on the campus had adequately provided it. Out of a possible score of 200, 150 was taken as satisfactory. The medians for the two groups were 86.09 (1948) and 86.7 (1949). Eighteen months later they had risen to 98.8 (1948) and 97.7 (1949). The English majors, to whom the examination was given from time to time, did much better. Their several scores ranged from 178 to 190, the median being 182.

Several pertinent suggestions "Toward a Common Understanding and a Common Effort" were made by Professor Lawson. He thinks colleges generally, and not just teachers colleges, are cold and impersonal and don't prepare us to teach English. The result is that we produce high school English teachers who quite understandably don't warm up to college English teachers. Moreover, we don't make much effort to understand each other. We don't go to each other's meetings and we don't read each other's journals. [We certainly hope *College English* readers look at the *English Journal* and vice versa!] And, to make matters worse, we speak different languages! The vocabulary of the high school teacher is the pedagogical vocabulary of the schools of education, that of college teachers is the vocabulary of literary history. The high school teacher turns to the schools of education rather than the liberal arts colleges

for help. Actually both high schools and colleges are moving toward general education because both share the problem of mass education. Both have large numbers of students whose inclinations are not scholarly. High school and college English teachers need to get together, need to forget the strata idea of elementary, high school, and college English, need to make

specific definitions of competencies in English from elementary school through college, need to stress the importance of our field as a distinctive field of language and literature. The convention concluded with the annual luncheon and with members departing for afternoon trains still chuckling over Ogden Nash's readings of his own poems.

## *Business*

### THE BOARD

The Board of Directors met both morning and afternoon of Thanksgiving Day. The roll call showed 156 present—a record number, we believe. The majority of the time was spent in listening to reports of officers and committees, none of which caused any heated debate. The reports seemed interesting enough, however, to cause requests that hereafter copies should be available to the many members present as auditors as well as to Board members. The Secretary's report showed a total membership on August 1, 1951, of 13,755, of which the Elementary and College sections contributed about 2,500 each and the High School Section the other 8,500. The Treasurer's report showed a gain of about \$2,000 for the last fiscal year, which brought the total net assets (exclusive of inventories) on August 1 to about \$43,000.

The Board elected as Nominating Committee for 1952 Marion C. Sheridan, James T. Hillhouse High School, New Haven, *chairman*; Harold A. Anderson, University of Chicago; Robert C. Pooley, University of Wisconsin; Angela M. Broening, Bureau of Measurement, Statistics and Research, Baltimore; and Mark Neville, headmaster of Chicago Latin School for Boys.

The Nominating Committee of 1951 offered its slate of candidates for offices as published in the May issues of all Council organs, and upon motion they were elected by unanimous voice vote: President, Lennox Grey, Teachers College, Columbia University; First Vice-President, Harlen M.

Adams, Chico State College; Second Vice-President, Helen K. Mackintosh, United States Office of Education; Secretary-Treasurer, W. Wilbur Hatfield, Chicago.

### THE ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

Attendance at the Business Meeting of all members was about equal to that at the Board, enough nondirectors coming in to replace directors compelled to leave.

The principal business was the consideration of resolutions. The following were offered by the Committee on Resolutions, which had been appointed and announced some months in advance. These resolutions were adopted:

*WHEREAS*, The members of the Cincinnati Convention Committee have given so much time and effort to the planning of the local arrangements for this Forty-first Convention of the NCCE, under the leadership of Miss Fannie J. Ragland of the Cincinnati Public Schools, and have generously and efficiently and graciously received and attended the Council members; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the National Council of Teachers of English express its deep gratitude to the Cincinnati Convention Committee for making the Fortieth Anniversary such a memorable occasion.

*WHEREAS*, Paul Farmer as President of the Council has guided us faithfully, inspiring, and challengingly; Lennox Grey as First Vice-President has masterfully co-ordinated and understandingly encouraged the many committees of the Council; Ruth G. Strickland as Second Vice-President has wisely planned and organized a stimulating program for the convention;

and W. Wilbur Hatfield as Secretary-Treasurer has carried on his numerous duties effectively and efficiently, as he always has done; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the Council express its admiration of and thanks for these notable services.

WHEREAS, The NCTE has as one of its main purposes the interpretation, fostering, and strengthening of the American way of life; and

WHEREAS, We welcome sincere and valid criticism as a characteristic of the American way of life; and

WHEREAS, Education in recent times has been subjected to unwarranted and specious criticism; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the NCTE through all its offices and means undertake a campaign of information to make clear in every way possible the contemporary aims and methods of the teaching of English.

WHEREAS, The study and improvement of teacher education in all fields and particularly in the English language arts are of great importance for the strengthening of American education; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the Executive Committee take the necessary steps through its Committee on Teacher Education and through other suitable agencies to study this problem and to offer adequate solutions.

WHEREAS, Teaching conditions in many areas of the country make it increasingly difficult for the teacher of English to perform his teaching duties adequately; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the Executive Committee take proper measures to study the problem of teaching load and extra-curricular activities of the English teacher toward the end that English teachers be enabled to perform their duties with maximum effectiveness.

JEROME W. ARCHER, *Chairman*  
 JAMES F. FULLINGTON  
 MYRTLE GUSTAFSON  
 LELAND JACOBS  
 T. D. JARRETT  
 JOSEPH MERSAND  
 MARK NEVILLE

Peter Donchian, Detroit, offered a resolution approving the proposal of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education that a national council for accreditation of teacher education be established. Because this was a complex prob-

lem, the Business Meeting referred it to the Executive Committee of the Council for study and action.

C. C. Fries, Ann Arbor, moved the following resolution, and it was adopted:

The National Council of Teachers of English supports the scientific study of the English language, and, realizing the importance of the results of that study in freeing our teaching from wasteful and harmful practices, recommends that, in the training of teachers, both prospective and in-service, opportunities be provided to acquaint English teachers with the principles, methods, results, and applications of modern linguistic science.

Furthermore, the National Council of Teachers of English believes that the schools should teach those forms of the English language which sound descriptive research has shown to be the practice of Standard English in the United States.

Alice Jackson Houston, Richmond, Virginia, moved the following resolution, which was adopted:

WHEREAS, There is such flexibility in local and state requirements for certification of teachers of English in the elementary, junior, and senior high school systems; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the National Council of Teachers of English study the problem of minimum requirements for certification of teachers of English in the several states with a view to raising the requirements to such level as will improve the quality of instruction of English nationally.

Richard Corbin, Peekskill, New York, and others cited the frequent public criticisms of the schools' instruction in English, especially in spelling and grammar, and urged that the Council take action to defend teachers of English against unwarranted criticism. No action was taken, but the Executive Committee has arranged for serious study of the problem.

Marion C. Sheridan, chairman of the Nominating Committee for 1951, suggested the following six persons for Directors-at-Large for three years beginning at the close of the convention, and they were elected by acclamation: J. W. Ashton, Indiana University; Althea Beery, Cincinnati Public Schools; Marie D. Bryan,

University of Maryland; Inez Frost, Hutchinson, Kansas, Junior College; Lou La Brant, New York University; and Irvin C. Poley, Germantown Friends School, Philadelphia.

The Conference on College Composition and Communication held its third annual luncheon business meeting Friday at the Metropole Hotel. Chairman George Wykoff presided; 128 members were present. Three major matters were discussed: (1) the fact that the CCCC has no constitution and by-laws and that its ways of doing business have developed as various needs arose; (2) the fact that it would facilitate the planning of the spring meetings if each November an assistant chairman were to be elected to succeed automatically the associate chairman the following year and the chairman the year after; and (3) the nomination and election of officers. It was moved and carried that the chairman appoint a constitution committee. The chairman asked that the naming of the committee might be delayed

to give time for further consideration. It was also moved and carried that an assistant chairman be elected at the present business meeting. The following elections took place.

*New Officers:* Chairman, Harold B. Allen, Minnesota; Associate Chairman, Karl Dykema, Youngstown; Assistant Chairman, T. A. Barnhart, St. Cloud. *Continuing Officers:*

Treasurer: W. Wilbur Hatfield; Editor, Charles W. Roberts, Illinois; Secretary, Glenn J. Christensen, Lehigh. *Executive Committee (New Members):* Strang Lawson, Colgate; F. Earl Ward, Macalester; L. A. King, Muskingum; John Hodges, Tennessee; Francis Shoemaker, Wisconsin; Jerome Archer, Marquette; McDonald Williams, Wilberforce; Kathryn Scott, Georgia State College for Women; T. H. Farr, Tennessee; Emma Beekman, Los Angeles; Donald Bird; Stephens; and Gordon Mills, Los Angeles. George S. Wykoff, as retiring chairman, automatically becomes a member of the Executive Committee.

At the College Section business meeting, two members were elected to the College Section Nominating Committee. They were Francis P. Chisholm, Wisconsin State College, River Falls, Wisconsin, and N. P. Tillman, Atlanta University, Atlanta, Georgia. A third member, Horst Frenz (chairman), Indiana University, was appointed by the Executive Committee. The function of the Nominating Committee is to propose candidates for election next May to the Section Committee, to the Board of Directors as representatives of the Section. Those elected each serve a three-year term. The nominations are:

#### CANDIDATES FOR COLLEGE SECTION COMMITTEE

SISTER MARY CHRYSANTHA, O.S.F., Saint Francis, Joliet, Illinois  
JAMES F. FULLINGTON, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio  
BRICE HARRIS, Pennsylvania State College, State College, Pennsylvania  
JOHN CUNYUS HODGES, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee  
C. V. HUENEMANN, Jamestown College, Jamestown, North Dakota  
JAMES MASON, Arkansas State College, Jonesboro, Arkansas

#### CANDIDATES FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JEROME W. ARCHER, Marquette University, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin  
NICK AARON FORD, Morgan State College, Baltimore 12, Maryland  
STRANG LAWSON, Colgate University, Hamilton, New York  
CHARLES F. VANCLEVE, Ball State Teachers College, Muncie, Indiana

Theodore Hornberger, University of Minnesota, chairman of the College Section, has left for a year's stay in Brazil in the service of the State Department. His unexpired term will be filled by James F. Fullington, Ohio State University, a member of the Section Committee elected in 1949.

## *Report and Summary*

THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON College Composition and Communication will be held Friday and Saturday, March 28 and 29, at the Hotel Carter, Cleveland, Ohio. Two general sessions will be held, two sets of panel discussions, and three workshop sessions.

The two topics to be discussed at the general sessions will be: "What Employers Expect from Courses in Composition and Communication" and "What Our Academic Colleagues Expect from Courses in Composition and Communication." Papers will be read by representatives of newspapers, government service, industry, and business and by colleagues from the social sciences, natural sciences, law, medicine, and engineering.

The first group of four panel discussions will be on "Audio-Visual Aids," "Representative Freshman Programs," "The Publisher's Problems in Providing Text Material for the Freshman Course," and "Gauging Resources for the Study of Communication." Subjects for the second group will be: "Building the Freshman Course on a Single Body of Subject Matter," "Construction and Use of Tests," and "Sources of Information for the Establishment of usage Standards."

Approximately the same number of workshops will be available as at last year's meeting; several new ones, however, will replace those previously held.

The speaker at the Saturday luncheon will be Harold B. Allen, University of Minnesota, chairman of the CCCC, who will discuss the results of the six-month survey he has been making under the Ford Foundation to determine what universities are doing to prepare college teachers of composition and communication.

Complete programs will be mailed to members and other interested persons about March 1.

PARSING AND SENTENCE ANALYSIS are the two main features of formal grammar as usually taught. In "Parts of Speech—beyond the Classroom," in the *School Review* for November, Anthony L. Tovatt reports a simple experiment. He asked P.T.A. members, graduate students in a college of education, undergraduate students in an English class, students in an undergraduate class in education—150 all together—to identify the parts of speech in this sentence: "Practically all boys play baseball at an early age." He also asked them, "When you write, do you think in terms of the parts of speech you are writing?" Of the 40 who succeeded in identifying the parts of speech in the sentence, 27 said "No" to his question; of the 110 who failed to identify the parts of speech, 43 said that in writing they use the skill they do not have. His experiment was limited to a few persons and is perhaps subject to other criticism, but it clearly indicates that many advocates of the teaching of "recognition" grammar do not know what they are talking about.

TELEVISION FOR EDUCATION IS the plan of the British Broadcasting Corporation. In an experiment slated for next summer a half-hour program for a five-day week will carry topics such as travel, science, current affairs, aesthetics, and industry. Since 80 per cent of the population is in television range, it is estimated that more than four million children will be exposed to the new medium of teaching.

"EUROPE'S FAITH IN AMERICAN Fiction" is discussed by Perry Miller in the December *Atlantic*. Lecturing in many European centers on American fiction, he found the readers there assuming that our fiction is an index of our culture. Europeans accept readily the explanation of American

literature as a derivative of European, but Mr. Miller points out that there is also something strongly different and original about it. The works of protest and of violence—Dos Passos, Hemingway, Caldwell, Faulkner—are most read in Europe, partly because they are supposed to be most characteristically American. But Europeans are puzzled by these books which depict hell on earth and yet do not seem hopeless, like Sartre. Mr. Perry explains this mystery under the surface as something more than vitality; it is due to the feeling of freedom and the consequent self-confidence. He goes on to question whether he should have told Europeans about the great mass of Americans, indifferent to literature and art and quite contented in their materialistic paradise—really the people on Main Street, who are not unhappy and may be expected to move up eventually in other phases of culture as they have in dress, plumbing, food, etc. After all, neither Mr. Perry nor his friends in Europe seem to have compared the mass culture of America with the mass culture of Europe. Literature tends to deal with the exceptional, or to take an exceptional view of the typical, persons. It is an index to culture but not a photograph.

*PMLA* IS SOMETIMES REGARDED as a storehouse of dusty and insignificant research. The December issue cannot be so characterized; it contains half-a-dozen articles whose conclusions, at least, should interest college teachers of English.

"PYGMALION: BERNARD SHAW'S Dramatic Theory and Practice," the lead article, by Milton Crane, shows that Shaw must have been spoofing the public when he said or implied that he did not believe in the traditional "well-made play"—exposition in the first act, a situation in the second, and unraveling in the third.

"THE NIGGER OF THE 'NARCISSUS': A Re-examination," by James E. Miller, Jr., argues that the central idea of this variously interpreted novel is the change

in the whole crew, from "clashing diversity into . . . peaceful solidarity."

DAVID ALLAN ROBERTSON, JR., suggests in his "'Dover Beach' and 'Say Not the Struggle Naught Availeth'" that the Clough poem may have been an answer to Arnold's. Both poems seem to have been written long before publication, the authors were personal friends and correspondents in spite of differing opinions, and Clough's imagery seems related to Arnold's. The suggestion, whether accepted or not, might help some young people in the examination of the poems.

A. S. P. WOODHOUSE AND CLEANTH Brooks, supposedly debating the merits of the historical and the aesthetic approach to Milton, agree that for the best interpretation both historical consideration and aesthetic analysis are necessary. Their difference is at most one of emphasis. Perhaps the polemics between the extreme historians and equally extreme "New" critics are about finished. Speed the day!

ROY W. BATTEHOUSE, CONSIDERING "Hamlet's Apostrophe to Man," finds it a main clue to interpretation of the character: Hamlet is caught in a time out of joint between the opposing views (1) that man is a little lower than the angels and (2) that he belongs with the beasts. Both views were expressed by prominent contemporaries.

J. R. HULBERT'S "THE GENESIS OF *Beowulf*: A Caveat" actually sums up present opinions: *Beowulf* is the work of a single author who used material from popular lays; the basis was not mythology but folklore; it was written in the first half of the eighth century—the only nonreligious epic of Anglo-Saxon times—by a Christian author inspired by Caedmon and his followers; and the model was the *Aeneid*. He warns that these opinions may be abandoned later, as others which he cites have been.

## New Books Professional

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF SHAKESPEARE'S IMAGERY.** By W. H. CLEMEN. Harvard University Press. Pp. 236. \$3.25.

A revised and augmented version of an original and sensitive study first published in German in 1936 under the title *Shakespeare's Bilder*. It will inevitably be compared with Caroline Spurgeon's *Shakespeare's Imagery*, but, as J. Dover Wilson, who writes the Preface, points out, there are two basic differences between the two works. Miss Spurgeon's method is statistical, Dr. Clemen's is organic; her aim is to throw light upon the mind of Shakespeare the man, his is to elucidate the art of Shakespeare the poet-dramatist. The result is that Miss Spurgeon is particularly concerned with the images of the canon as a whole, Dr. Clemen with the form and significance of particular images or groups of images in their context. Dr. Clemen first examines the plays of the early and middle periods, then the great tragedies, and finally the "romances." Although he allows that many of his conclusions are tentative, two seem fairly certain: Shakespeare's art of adapting imagery to dramatic purposes is at its height in the tragedies; Shakespeare's unique achievement seems to be that "he has contrived to transform a means of expression, which by nature and virtue originated in the poetical sphere, into a purely and specifically *dramatic* instrument of unforeseen effectiveness and complexity."

**ELIZABETHAN ACTING.** By B. L. JOSEPH. Oxford University Press. Pp. 153. \$3.50.

A volume which should help to illumine the text of many Elizabethan plays. The author's method is to examine in detail the accounts of the use of voice and gesture which appear in the numerous Renaissance treatises on rhetorical delivery and then relate his findings to the texts of specific plays and to descriptions of theatrical productions. His major conclusion is that Elizabethan plays are often most dramatic when their literary qualities are given full scope.

**THE PRAYERS OF JOHN DONNE.** By HERBERT H. UMBACH. Bookman Associates. Pp. 109. \$2.50.

This selection of prayers by John Donne, minister and theologian, helps to round out our knowledge of John Donne, poet.

**THE POETRY OF JOHN DONNE.** By DONIPHAN LOUTHAN. Bookman Associates. Pp. 193. \$3.50.

The subtitle of this volume is "A Study in Explication," but the author states clearly in his Preface that he makes no pretense of presenting it as "a high powered product of the New Criticism." His study is based on the premise that Donne's poems need more careful reading than they have had, and he proceeds to examine them as a whole and to analyze a number of shorter poems and passages in detail.

**A CELTIC MISCELLANY: TRANSLATIONS FROM THE CELTIC LITERATURES.** By KENNETH HURLSTONE JACKSON. Harvard University Press. Pp. 359. \$3.75.

This anthology is unique in current literature because it depends not at all upon previous anthologies. Professor Jackson has made his own translations from the great corpus of Celtic writing, and he has included translations of prose as well as poetry, from not one but from all six of the Celtic literatures. A treasure.

**A MIRROR FOR PRINCES.** Translated from the Persian by REUBEN LEVY. Dutton. Pp. 265. \$3.75.

The eleventh-century warrior chieftain whose counsels Professor Levy here translates wrote them at the age of sixty-three to warn his favorite son and destined successor against the pitfalls of life. Like similar manuals of political conduct and ethics in other literatures, expediency is its motto. Its author is candid, wise, and witty and in the course of his advice-giving conveys a realistic picture of Persian court life.

**MARTIAL BOOKS AND TUDOR VERSE.**  
By G. GEOFFREY LANGSAM. King's Crown Press. Pp. 213. \$3.25.

A study of the sixteenth-century English citizen's interest in military books and narrative verse for the purpose of showing what the sixteenth-century theatergoer and reader was likely to have known of military matters. An aid toward appreciating the martial allusions which fill Tudor literature.

**SIR WALTER RALEGH.** By ERNEST A. STRATHMANN. Columbia University Press. Pp. 292. \$3.75.

A study of the thought of Sir Walter Ralegh as an exemplar of Elizabeth skepticism. Strathmann finds that Ralegh is more a spokesman than an innovator and "a leader in that energetic company who did not find religious faith a barrier to philosophical and scientific speculations."

**TEACHING THE LANGUAGE ARTS.** By WILLARD F. TIDYMAN and MARGUERITE BUTTERFIELD. ("McGraw-Hill Series in Education.") McGraw-Hill. Pp. 433. \$4.50.

A companion book to the DeBoer-Kauffers-Miller *Teaching Secondary English* published a few months ago from which it differs chiefly in the different personalities of the authors, in the use of elementary-school illustrations of the general principles, and in its omission of discussion of the teaching of literature. The book aims to give the prospective teacher or the teacher in service practical help in adopting the newer techniques of teaching, following what is sometimes called the experience method rather than the older authoritarian "pouring in" and mechanical drill.

**PSYCHOLOGY IN THE SERVICE OF THE SCHOOL.** By M. F. CLEUGH. Philosophical Library. Pp. 183. \$3.75.

A University of London lecturer writes simple advice for teachers and "headmasters" interested in developing children (through high school age) as well as in maintaining discipline. The book is nontechnical in language, modest in

its claims for psychology, and apparently sensible in recommendations. Many illustrative examples of moderate, everyday sorts. Useful to the young teacher in training.

**HISTORICAL OUTLINES OF ENGLISH SOUNDS AND INFLECTIONS.** By SAMUEL MOORE. Revised by ALFRED H. MARCKWART. George Wahrs Publishing Co. (Ann Arbor).

This text, written in 1919 and revised by Moore in 1929, is now rearranged for convenience in teaching. Middle English absorbs 90 of the 178 pages. Remarkably clear in statement and organization but too detailed for use as a text in an introductory course. Teachers will find it a ready index to the sounds of *Beowulf* and Chaucer.

**THE HUMANITIES: APPLIED AESTHETICS.** By LOUISE DUDLEY and AUSTIN FARECY. 2d ed. McGraw-Hill. Pp. 318. \$6.00.

This college text endeavors simultaneously to show the principles common to painting, sculpture, architecture, literature, and music and to help the student experience and interpret many individual works. It has been rewritten, with the original organization, in the light of ten years' classroom use.

**THE MATERIAL RESOURCES OF CURRICULUM LABORATORIES.** By ELEANOR ANTAN. (School of Education, University of Connecticut at Storrs, Curriculum Bull. 1.) Pp. 37. \$0.35.

Of value to school systems and institutions that are considering the establishment of curriculum libraries or that wish to improve existing services.

**HOW YOU CAN TEACH ABOUT COMMUNISM.** By RYLAND W. CRARY and GERALD L. STEIBEL. *PRIMER ON COMMUNISM.* Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith (212 Fifth Ave., New York 10).

Both pamphlets are interesting and informative as well as good teaching guides for schools where the subject would be permitted.

## Nonfiction

**FABULOUS BEASTS.** By PETER LUM. Pantheon. \$3.75.

Factual information interwoven with the myths and legends handed down by our fore-

bears. What was the influence of these beasts and monsters upon religion, folklore, and the arts? Benevolent, fantastic, grotesque, mischievous, they held the fancy of primitive

people. The author tells about the gryphon, dragon, unicorn, mermaids, and others and about the traits attributed to such real animals as the fox and serpent. Quaint illustrations by Anne Marie Jauss. Delightful.

**THE GODS OF THE GREEKS.** By CARL KERENYI. Thames & Hudson. \$4.75.

"A mythology of the Greeks for adults," the author calls his work in an interesting Introduction. This book presents the stories of the Greek gods, together with the stories concerning the origin and destiny of mankind, in such a form that they can be read from beginning to end as if they were chapters of a single narrative. Appropriately and profusely illustrated.

**GODS, GRAVES, AND SCHOLARS: THE STORY OF ARCHAEOLOGY.** By C. W. CERAM. Knopf. \$5.75.

Past ages of man as shown by the discoveries at Troy, Nineveh, Chichén Itzá, etc. A fascinating revelation of history with a hypothesis of the future. Seventy-two drawings, four maps, forty-nine halftones, index, and tables.

**THE POWER OF ART.** By JOHN M. WARBEKE. Philosophical Library. \$6.00.

Published posthumously. In the Preface Mrs. Warbeke says her husband believed that greater emphasis on the arts and aesthetic qualities in our homes, our schools, our churches, and everyday life might lead us to a new golden age. In this book he discusses the functions of sculpture, poetry, painting, music, drama, and architecture and their part in enriching our lives. The author's personal contacts have enabled him to write a challenging book.

**PAUL CÉZANNE.** By MARION DOWNER. Lothrop. \$2.50.

A biography of the nineteenth-century artist, with emphasis upon the author's appreciation of human values. Frontispiece in color, eight pages of halftones.

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**CIVIL LIBERTIES UNDER ATTACK.** By HENRY STEELE COMMAGER, ROBERT K. CARR, ZEPHARIAH CHAFEE, JR., WALTER GELHORN, CURTIS BOK, JAMES PHINNEY BAXTER, III. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. \$3.50.

Six distinguished authorities have contributed important essays on the uneasy state of freedom in America today. The volume deserves the time of those who believe in the principles of the ACLU.

**THE POCKET BIBLE.** (Cardinal ed.) Pocket Books. \$0.35.

Arranged chronologically by time and subject matter, this new edition prints prose as prose, verse as verse, drama as drama, and letters as letters. It's the King James Version with modern spelling and punctuation.

**THREE WEEKS TO A BETTER MEMORY.** By BRENDAN BYRNE. Introduction by JAMES A. FARLEY. Winston. \$2.95.

It has its moments of humor, but the soundness of the book is slight. Farley's page and a half is superficial, meaningless.

**PLEASURES OF MUSIC.** Edited by JACQUES BARZUN. Viking. \$5.00.

More than one hundred pieces of writing on the subject of music. Shaw, Hardy, Voltaire, Nietzsche, De Quincey—the noted men of literature are represented. This would please extremely any lover of music.

**ON BEING INTELLIGENT.** By ASHLEY MONTAGU. Schuman. \$2.95.

The author of *On Being Human*, whose particular field is anthropology, draws also from the social sciences and modern psychology. He places more emphasis upon self-fulfilment in relation to others than upon one's role as an individual. It is man's intelligence, he says, which has brought man so far, and it remains his chief hope. A very helpful book. If we are unsatisfied with life, the fault lies in ourselves.

**MENTAL HEALTH AND HINDU PSYCHOLOGY.** By SWAMI AKHILANANDA. Introduction by O. HOBART MOWRER. Harper. \$3.50.

Mowrer calls our attention to the fact that in prehistoric and early historic times problems of body and soul were treated by the same persons—priests, medicine men. We have turned to medicine now for both physical and mental treatment with unsatisfactory results. Mowrer discusses Freud and the obvious moral: the church and religion are neglecting a great opportunity to deal with emotional and personality problems. Therefore this book on mental health and Hindu psychology. Chapters on social adjustment, conflict and tension, frustration, fear, anxiety, power of mind, marriage, love, etc. Emphasis on religion. 540 pages.

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Some of these historical conclusions may shock Virginia aristocracy. John Smith and Pocahontas come in for a bit of debunking, but they are controversial figures. The greatest interest lies in the stark and tragic early history—the blunders in relation to the Indians, the suffering which eventually produced the founders of the Declaration of Independence. Not a pretty study, but triumphant. End maps.

**THE COWBOY AND HIS HORSE.** By SYDNEY E. FLETCHER. Introduction by JOSEPH H. JACKSON. Grosset & Dunlap. \$2.95.

Jackson says, "You'll go a long way before you find anything better, in either words or pictures, about cattle, horses, or the men who handle them." There are frontier stories and accounts of ranch life today; western songs, pictures of longhorns, ornate saddles, spurs, etc., and an interesting chapter on branding. It's good. About  $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11\frac{1}{2}$  inches. 160 pages. 225 drawings.

### Poetry, Fiction, and Drama

**CHILDREN OF THE ARCHBISHOP.** By NORMAN COLLINS. Duell, Sloan. \$4.00.

By the author of *Dulcimer Street*. England, 1920-38. Most of the action is in an orphan asylum near London. The story opens with a doorstep baby who becomes quite a character.

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An experiment in exploring the imaginative structure of a creative work as the surest and most rewarding way to reach a fuller understanding of literature. A careful study is made of imagery, metaphor, and irony in the works of Shakespeare, Pope, Jane Austen, E. M. Forster, and Virginia Woolf.

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**THE ILIAD OF HOMER.** Translated by RICHMOND LATTIMORE. University of Chicago Press. \$4.50.

The Introduction explains present beliefs about Homer, outlines and analyzes *The Iliad*, and discusses Homeric style. Lattimore has chosen "a free six-beat line" as best reproducing the speed and rhythm he finds in the original. The speed is achieved; the rhythm is less clear.

### Reissues

**THE COMPLETE ETCHINGS OF GOYA.** Foreword by ALDOUS HUXLEY. Crown. \$5.00.

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Two brothers, Samuel and Alan Towne, were skilful orthopedic surgeons. Their grandfather had been a great doctor, a man of integrity, interested in humanity. Alan had served in China during World War II. This is a study of people, their complexes and ambitions. Samuel, the older man, was a fine surgeon, admired, respected, rich—and completely selfish. Alan had ideals. Each had his family, and each represents a group in the medical field. A controversial subject—the physician's debt to society, and society's debt to the physician, and society's responsibility to the poor and the sick. A thought-provoking book, dramatic and exciting.

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Many readers have enjoyed those gossipy chronicles of the people of nonexistent Barsetshire. Mrs. Thirkell has a flair for gently poking fun at the very British characters whom she creates and quite evidently adores. The courtship of the Duke's daughter is only one of the social comedies portrayed. A critic asserts that the British seem to need escape reading. Perhaps we all do.

**LIGHT THROUGH THE MIST.** By HARRY FEIN. Bruce Humphries. Pp. 66. \$2.50.

The mystic rhythms of the Hebrew chants are wafted through the 124 quatrains which speak of the loves and ills of every man.

**IMMEDIATE SUN.** By ROSEMARY THOMAS. Twayne Library of Modern Poetry. Pp. 64. \$2.50.

Archibald MacLeish, in the Foreword, proclaims Miss Thomas as a poet arrived. However, it seems she arrived a little late; if she had come fifty years sooner, perhaps her work would not echo Dickinson, Sandburg, Millay, and Benét.

**WHERE THE COMPASS SPINS.** By RADCLIFFE SQUIRES. Twayne Library of Modern Poetry. Pp. 52. \$2.25.

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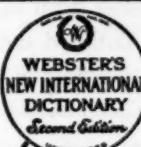
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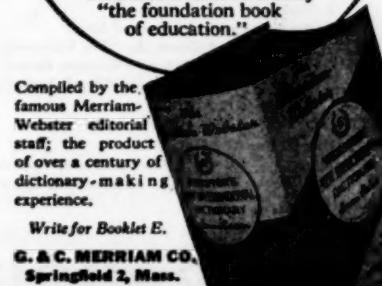
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*Scholarly Research—  
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# An Introduction to Research in English Literary History

by  
**Chauncey Sanders**

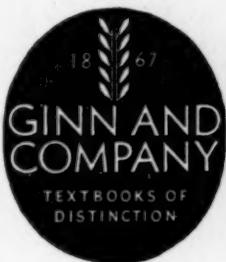
FOR COLLEGE COURSES IN BIBLIOGRAPHY AND METHOD ON THE GRADUATE LEVEL, this book is one of the most complete guides any student could find on scholarly research. Although the examples illustrating methods of research are all taken from English and American literature, the basic principles outlined should be of assistance in any type of thesis project in the field of humanities. Everything the student

needs to know about how to proceed with research and how to maintain scholastic integrity during the course of research is presented. There is a chapter on Folklore by Stith Thompson, who is one of the best-known scholars in this field.  
*Published January 8, \$5.50*

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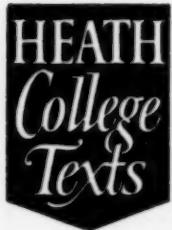
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